

CONTENT AND METHOD IN FIELDWORK TEACHING

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Ph.D.

University of Edinburgh, 1976.

"If the experience before us is completely new and strange; if there is much new material to be observed, material that doesn't seem to fall into any recognisable pattern order; if we cannot tell what are the variables that influence the situation, much less isolate them we will be unwise to try to think like a detective, or a scientist in a laboratory.

".... In such situations we must use our minds very differently. We must clear them of preconceived notions, we must suspend judgement, we must open ourselves to the situation, take in as much data as we can, and wait patiently for some kind of order to appear out of the chaos. In short, we must think like a little child".

John Holt - The Mind at Work
from How Children Learn

SUMMARY

This is an exploratory study of fieldwork teachers in interaction with one course, a University post graduate one year Diploma in Social Work. The central purpose was to attempt to identify the aims, methods, and focus of practising fieldwork teachers, to explore the nature and content of their teaching, and to illumine understanding of the complex educational process in which they were involved.

The emphasis throughout is on the 'rumpled reality' of life on a social work course, on the struggles and confusions which are a normal and familiar part of any educational process. The research paradigm used was that developed by Malcolm Parlett within educational research called 'illuminative evaluation'. The methods used were observation, participant observation, interview and questionnaire (for factual data only).

There is initial emphasis on the dearth of research into fieldwork teaching, on the exploratory stage of the research, and on a review of the extensive if fragmented British literature on supervision in social work education.

The study itself falls naturally into two parts. The first part, utilizing participant observation as the main method, seeks to illumine background understanding of the complex interactional processes involved in social work education. Data was collected throughout one academic year. The research highlights in particular the impact of/...

of the structure, organisation and administration of the course on the process which ensued; the content, emphasis, and educational dilemmas associated with classroom teaching in social work; the ambivalent nature of 'the partnership' with the field.

A focus on the concerns and intergroup activity of the three main groups of participants, students, fieldwork teachers, and tutors, is developed as the concept of three 'worlds' emerges each with its own boundaries and difficulties in relation to the educational task. The shifting pre-occupations and task definitions over time are explored as students are seen to move through four main stages or phases of change. The implications of these stages for tutor/fieldwork teacher and course/field communications are seen to be significant.

The second part of the research focuses more directly on the fieldwork teachers themselves, their numbers, experience, agency context, educational background and opportunities and satisfactions. Data was collected in semi-structured interviews and fieldwork teachers found to fall into three groupings each with its characteristic 'style' of supervision. Each 'style' adopted a different dominant value position in respect of normal supervisory practice. Student definitions of 'good' and 'bad' supervision in first and second fieldwork placements are considered in relation to these 'styles' and the teaching implications of style for phase of learning in the field noted./...

noted.

Finally the key concepts generated by the data are drawn together, the limits and relevance of such a study examined, and theoretical implications and links developed. Proposals for change and for further research in social work education are made.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

Acknowledgements are due to

The Tutors, Fieldwork Teachers and Students of the University of Edinburgh Postgraduate Diploma in Social Work, 1972/73, whose enthusiasm and co-operation made the study possible.

The Social Work Services Group who financed the project.

My supervisors Megan Browne, Professor John Spencer and Dr. J.D. Sutherland for their unfailing interest, encouragement and time.

My colleagues and in particular my "near neighbours" Nancy Drucker, Wendy Paterson, John Waterhouse and Margaret Reynolds who incited me to finish and lent ongoing support.

My family and friends for endless patience and understanding.

In particular Fiona Adamson, Valerie Lobban and Pamela Russell. Professor Hy Resnick, University of Washington for introducing me to the work of John Adams.

Christine Barsotti for typing this thesis, for struggling with my writing, and for much encouragement and prompt help.

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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

This is a study of fieldwork teachers in interaction with one Course. It is an attempt to plough a furrow through largely untouched and uncharted territory where the question "what do fieldwork teachers actually do?" finds little response. Ask instead "what should fieldwork teachers do?" and the response is a very considerable literature, largely prescriptive, providing or aiming to provide some certainty on the subject. The result, however, is a surprising mixture of sage sense and confused thinking. It is easy to be critical, but the reasons for the missing studies are, I suspect, not hard to find.

They rest in the complexity of the social work education process with its high value on the integration of theoretical understanding and practical experience, on the difficulty of describing, let alone evaluating, the activity of individual social workers in individual agencies as they teach, or enable, or provide a role model, or whatever; and of understanding the reciprocal nature of the activity for the students involved. They rest too in the fashionable beliefs within social work about the essentially scientific nature of research in its respectable experimental form. Other reasons there may be, but these are the ones I encountered most forcefully in relation to this attempt. There have been many times when to proceed has seemed foolhardy, and discretion definitely the better part of valour.

To proceed, however, the first part of the study reflects on the early exploratory stage of the research process. It is necessarily to some extent autobiographical, and for two reasons/...

reasons. Firstly, my interest in research grew directly out of my practice as a fieldwork unit teacher of some eight year's experience in a large teaching hospital, where the commitment to professional education was a paramount concern; and secondly, because I believe that the experience and perspective of the researcher is a necessary and integral part of the research process itself. Such a perspective cannot be ignored, and necessarily affects the situation; the evidence presented needs to be understood within the context of personal perspective and known bias.

This properly raises a problem central to this study, the subjective nature of the approach used. Can 'personal' interpretation be scientific - and what of objectivity? Here I stand in agreement with Parlett and Hamilton when they write

'Behind such questions lies a basic but erroneous assumption; that forms of research exist which are immune to prejudice, experimenter bias, and human error. This is not so. Any research study requires skilled human judgements and is thus vulnerable.

Even in evaluation studies that handle automatically processed numerical data, judgement is necessary at every stage; in the choice of samples; in the construction or selection of tests; in deciding conditions of administration; in selecting the mode of statistical treatment (e.g. whether or not to use factor analysis); in the relative weight given to different results; and particularly, in the selection and presentation of findings in reports¹¹.

Hudson's/...

Hudson's Law of Selective Attention to Data, as described in the "The Cult of the Fact" - "first devised half seriously, but here presented in all earnestness, or almost so", I quote - explores this dilemma interestingly too, and the fifth law with its attendant codicil has important implications in the rejection of the naively objective; that the

'behaviour plus measurement technology plus data plus logical theory model has the status of a fiction; a fiction that can no longer be justified in terms of its usefulness of the fruits it is about to bear.'²

My search has been for the midway, for that mixture of personal insight and objectively ascertainable fact, which may help to make sense of the data and add to our understanding of the complex processes that make up social work education.

A further important characteristic of this study is that it is evolutionary in nature. It rests perhaps most nearly within the social anthropological paradigm developed within educational research by Malcolm Parlett, to which he gives the title 'illuminative evaluation'.³ The impact of the educational milieu within which the study was conceived is crucial, as is the development of thought and search for clarity inherent in the exploratory phase of any study. I have chosen to emphasise this stage, often neglected, in the attempt to be clear and explicit as far as I possibly can about the development of/...

of the project. It is too easy to write up research in ways which skate over or evade the untidiness of the business, and perpetuate myths about the process itself. W.F. Whyte in his account of strategy in Street Corner Society mirrors something of my feelings:

'The ideas that we have in research are only in part a logical product growing out of a logical weighing of evidence. We do not generally think problems through in a straight line. Often we have the experience of being immersed in a mass of confusing data. We study the data carefully, bringing all our powers of logical analysis to bear upon them. We come up with an idea or two. But still the data do not fall in any coherent pattern. Then we go on living with the data - and with the people - until perhaps some chance occurrence casts a totally different light upon the data and we begin to see a pattern we have not seen before'.

He goes on to stress the importance of then examining the pattern but concludes

'I am convinced that the actual evolution of research ideas does not take place in accord with the formal statements we read on research methods. The ideas grow up in part out of our immersion in the data and out of the whole process of living. Since so much of this process/...

process proceeds on the unconscious level, I am sure that we can never present a full account of it Only as we accumulate a series of accounts of how research was actually done will we be able to go beyond the logical intellectual picture and learn to describe the actual research process'.⁴

To return to the content of the study itself. The exploratory phase deals with the initial research proposals and the origins of the idea. The remainder of the chapter describes the search for a way of examining fieldwork supervision and shares with the reader the development of my own thinking. Reading played an important part both in the management of my anxiety in the design stage, and in the furthering of my ideas throughout the period of the study. I have chosen to focus on the British literature which is I think a more direct and practical body of writing than its counterpart in the States. I do so, however, in the full awareness that American ideas have played a formative part in this aspect of social work education, and have therefore highlighted material by those authors whose work has been of special interest in Britain.

Next I have included a brief account of the research philosophy which has both informed and contributed towards the eventual choice of research design, together with an account of the implications of the strategy chosen/...

chosen, The structure, organisation and membership of the chosen Course at Edinburgh University is also important as is some understanding of the contextual pressures within which the Course was operating in 1972/73.

The purpose of the study is to attempt to identify the aims, methods and focus of practising fieldwork teachers, to explore more fully the nature and content of their teaching, and to illumine understanding of the educational process in which they were involved.

The study as eventually conceived falls naturally into two parts. It is essentially descriptive and interpretative. The emphasis throughout is on the 'rumpled reality' of life on a social work course, on the struggles and confusions which are a normal and familiar part of the educational process. There is no attempt to eliminate complexity or to present an 'immaculate ideal'.⁵ The methods used were primarily observation, participant observation, interview and questionnaire, (for factual data only). The first part seeks to illumine background understanding of the Course, its administration and organisation. The content and emphasis of classroom teaching about social work practice is examined, as is the concept of 'the partnership'. A focus on the concerns and inter-group activity of the three main groups of participants is developed as the concept of three worlds emerges, each with its own boundaries and difficulties in relation to the educational dilemma. The shifting preoccupations and task definitions over the/...

the span of the academic year are explored as the students move from a position I perceive as 'Worlds Apart' to 'Worlds in Conflict', to some resolution of the professional/educational task - a phase somewhat mysteriously designated within the Course itself as 'IT' - the thing that happens, success - or professional socialisation?

The second part of the research focuses more directly on the fieldwork teachers themselves, who they are, what experience they have, why they persist in a difficult ambiguous role, what they enjoy. The data collection problem here has been considerable. The material was gathered in semi-structured interviews lasting from several sessions of two hours each, to individual sessions of 2½ hours. Where there were difficulties in understanding method or agency function I also visited and sat in on case discussions, group meetings and other significant situations. The search was for agreement between us that I had understood the essence of that experience which the fieldwork teacher was seeking, however explicitly or implicitly, to offer. Lack of conceptualisation on the part of practitioners was complemented by enormous enthusiasm and remarkable trust. No one, they assured me again and again, had ever asked them before what they did; and as they talked, explored and pondered, even then in the discussions, new insights emerged or old practice was re-evaluated. I have tried to do justice to their commitment/...

commitment and trust - I hope that my evaluation will make a sense to them that has real valid implications for day to day practice.

In conclusion, I have attempted to draw the main threads together, to pose my main findings and raise questions about them and to identify possible areas of ongoing research. If, in any measure, what I have written 'rings true' for the reader, casts new light on the complexity of the venture, or fires a new enthusiasm to launch or share in more research, then I shall feel I have been successful indeed.

PART I

This section of the study deals with the initial research idea, the exploratory phase of the work and the eventual research design. It includes a review of the relevant British literature, together with an account of the research philosophy and strategy which informed the design.

CHAPTER 1

Chapter 1 - The Exploratory Phase

The Origin of the Study

The story begins in 1971. It is debatable whether the uncertainties in social work are any less today than they were then. Then, as now, they are real, an inevitable part of a rapidly changing scene; for it is not only the way services are organised but the skills employed, the ways of utilising these, and the very nature of social work itself which are under examination. The educational problems facing social work have to be understood in this context.

The philosophy underlying the Social Work (Scotland) Act embodied in the White Paper 'Social Work and the Community'¹ reflects the development of knowledge and ideals about the need for social work to be concerned with the welfare of the whole community. The needs and problems of its weaker members are important but the span of attention, the canvas, is extended in the direction of preventive concepts and preoccupation with 'the quality of life' within our communities in a way that is presently more ideologically satisfactory than practically possible. The hub of the Act, the now much maligned Section 12, lays a duty on the Local Authority in the following terms:

'it shall be the duty of every local authority to promote social welfare by making available advice, guidance and assistance on such a scale as may be appropriate for their area'.²

Subsequent/...

Subsequent circulars have illumined the statutory meaning of advice, guidance and assistance in such a way as to direct attention to the right of every person to a service appropriate to their needs. This duty, together with the merging of the Probation Service within the comprehensive departments and the creation of the Children's Hearings, set a precedent which has not been followed in England and Wales. It may be said that the philosophy underlying both social work re-organisations is different, the one providing for the positive promotion of the welfare of the whole community, the other for an amalgamation of existing services whose primary concern is the support and care of the disadvantaged in the community. Subsequent local authority re-organisations, the integration of the Health Service Social Work Services within the local authority structure, Health Service Re-organisation itself, and the continuing development of the specialist Probation Service serve to remind us that there are many interests, political as well as social, to be served: that social work logic does not always prevail, and that in any event the generic/specialist debate is far from over. The boundaries of social work are in dispute, the skills and methods under debate, and uncertainty is never far away. It would be easy to retreat from the ideology of 1968, but I think the path leads ahead to new searches for wider perspectives in relating concepts of community to social work activity; to the analysis and examination of current practice, and to/...

to the development of new ways of meeting need.

The Scottish Act is visionary but the implementation of visions is an anxious business. Demand for services has increased dramatically. The removal of the old boundaries between services has highlighted knowledge and service gaps in painfully acute ways, and the possibility of promoting the welfare of the community is a concept still being explored rather than a method well understood. A developing integrated social work service, much in the public eye and subject to much public criticism, is an anxious place to work and a difficult place to prepare or to be prepared to work in.

At a meeting of experienced fieldwork teachers in the West of Scotland early in 1972 these issues were discussed with a clarity and forcefulness that I found disturbing. "To survive in a jungle you need a jungle kit" was how they expressed it. A graphic if daunting picture of the task of fieldwork teachers in the newly integrated social work departments followed. "Of what should such a kit consist?" "Is there a core of field experience which students must have to survive subsequently as workers?" "How do you decide what is essential learning when the job of the new social worker has virtually no limits?" The preoccupation was not with standards but with survival. Nevertheless it was exactly this kind of concern that has led me into research. Students on one year Courses/...

Courses spend sixty per cent of their academic year in agencies, supervised individually by trained social workers. Surprisingly little, however, is known in any ordered sense about content or learning process. There is considerable reticence in the literature about how fieldwork teaching is conducted, as opposed to how it should be. It was from my perplexity about this credibility gap that my interest in research sprang. What was this educational relationship which I was offering students, and what was I supposed to be teaching? Was it what other people taught? Did this matter? I wondered whether it would be threatening to try to formulate those questions which mattered to me, and to begin to look for answers.

I had worked for eight years as a medical social worker taking students from the Edinburgh University Course, in groups of three or four at a time. My agency was a large teaching hospital, and until 1969 the students who came all aspired to be medical social workers. I was closely involved in much of the thinking and planning for the Course, and felt that I understood and identified with its philosophy and values. The Course itself was well established and had a high reputation. Unlike many new courses it had a core of experienced fieldwork teachers, and it seemed possible that here some of the problems associated with field experience could be more safely looked at. The Course had traditionally trained three groups/...

groups of social workers, psychiatric social workers, child care officers, and medical social workers, but in October 1969, the structure was changed to a pattern more consistent with the spirit of the Social Work (Scotland) Act. This raised interesting problems in the field and it was clear that alteration in one part of the Course had major implications, not always fully understood, for the rest. The purpose of the change had been to merge the three specialist streams and to provide a generic approach to core subjects, with some opportunity for study of special areas of interest. Fieldwork experience was widened so that students would have placements in two different kinds of agency, the second being the work area of their main choice and the one in which they hoped ultimately to find a job. This meant that whereas before a medical social work student had two placements in general hospitals, she might now spend, for example, the first in a local authority social work department and the second in hospital.

This change made both a practical difference to what I did and raised more clearly my queries about the nature of fieldwork experience and teaching. Up to that point in October 1969, I had had forty one students placed with me from the Course, all female, all wanting to be medical social workers. A breakdown of their ages looked as follows:

21-22 years	-	10 students
22-23 "	-	17 students
23-24 "	-	5 students
24-25 "	-	4 students
25-26 "	-	3 students
26-27 "	-	1 student
31 "	-	1 student

The younger students came direct from relevant university courses and had very limited social work experience. Of this group of students those aged twenty four and upwards had all had previous work experience, but only in two cases had this been within social work itself. October, 1969 faced me with a very different proposition; an Anglican minister, married with a family, aged forty; an experienced, untrained Family Service Unit worker, male, married aged twenty nine; and an experienced, untrained Child Care Officer, female, single, aged twenty three. None wished to work in a general hospital, all disliked or felt uneasy about physical illness, and all had a healthy irreverence for the traditions and "red tape" of a large traditional teaching hospital.

It was not surprising that my early attempts to provide a fieldwork placement based on my previous experience were not greatly appreciated. I was not alone in my dilemma, however, for colleagues in other spheres, notably in psychiatric social work, were used to older experienced students, and did not take kindly to/...

to those to whom I was so used. They were felt to be too young for such difficult work. It took time to emerge from this period of initial dismay, but as I did so it seemed necessary to ask questions about our aims, expectations, and assumptions regarding fieldwork experience. What, I wondered, not for the first time nor the last, was I trying to achieve?

As a fieldwork teacher I made my own decisions about the way the placement was organised, the cases which I selected for students, and the content I highlighted. I evolved my own methods of evaluation and of identifying progress, and altered my private curriculum when it seemed appropriate. Few questions were ever asked about what I did, and perhaps others assumed that they knew. I certainly made assumptions about what others did, but as students came from an ever wider range of agencies to mine these seemed an inadequate basis for helping. These students brought a range of differing experiences, and wanted different things from the placement. They raised interesting questions which made me think, questions about the nature of social work in institutions and its relationship to the shape of client need, and I found my ideas about the role of social work in hospital changing under their influence. I wondered whether others were similarly finding a need to rethink their positions, and felt I must try to find out.

Research, at the time, seemed the obvious answer.
My/...

My assumptions that I knew the field, could ask questions that were relevant and illumine the scene, all with a little help with research methodology, now seem less happy. Colleagues were helpful, wheels rolled, money was made available with what seemed then and now surprising ease. Social work research was politically "in". To the University in the shape of whatever committee decided it, I shall remain eternally grateful for a more cautious approach, a provisional probationary acceptance conditional upon successful completion of a research course in the Centre for Research in the Educational Sciences. Ignorant as I was then of the niceties of research methodology, and having been warned to leave myself room to manoeuvre, the project was somewhat vaguely entitled "A study of Content and Method in Fieldwork Teaching".

It is customary, if I often think rather unreal, to be expected to provide quite detailed research proposals in advance of the period of proposed study. I was no exception, and if the proposals bear little relationship to what actually ensued, I am not alone there either. They make naively interesting reading and are the point from which I began. Perhaps fortunately at the time I did not keep a copy, had not the courage to admit it or ask for one, so pursued my way relatively untrammelled by their implications.

They read as follows:

"It/...

"It seems that there would be considerable value in detailing the changes in fieldwork teaching which the progression from a "specialist" to a generic teaching programme has brought about.

'To illustrate this Miss Michael proposes to study her own and this Department's detailed records of students placed with her, paying particular attention to her second and sixth years in this post.

(Student Unit Supervisor at the Royal Infirmary Edinburgh). The material thus obtained would be compared with the material on students she supervised in her seventh and eight years.

'The expectation is that it will be of particular value to examine the nature of the students' learning task in the first placement of the last two years referred to, when the students placed were those planning to work eventually in fields other than medical social work, and to compare and contrast this with the more familiar learning patterns of Medical Social Work students in the first placement.

Another point of interest which may emerge would be whether there are any differences in these two types of student, and if so what light this might throw on selection procedures.

'It is anticipated that the proposed research will/...

will highlight some of the differential aspects of the task of the fieldwork teacher.

'If it proves possible and expedient to arrange for a comparison of any results obtained with the experience of teachers from another University generic course (e.g. Dundee) this would add a further dimension, and would be a bonus. No such approach has been made to Dundee University at present".

If what follows appears in a sense a digression from the theme of the research I ask you to understand that it reflects the process of beginning as I experienced it. It is the background against which my study has evolved, and is therefore important. In joining the 'Educational Sciences' I felt at first as if I was visiting a neighbouring tribe. The language was different, the oft quoted and fashionable references were quite unfamiliar, and it took time to begin to understand what was going on. I had to learn who was who, what the group valued and what were its major concerns, before I could begin to make links with my world of social work. It was perhaps my first conscious attempt at participant observation, and it is difficult to convey the process, the constant interaction between my perception, thought and feeling as I waited for sense to emerge. Difficult, too, to convey the excitement of first perceiving the essentials in/...

in discussion, and beginning to find the courage to test out my understanding. My apprehension changed to pleasure as I began to appreciate the opportunity of abstracting for myself the concepts and ideas most relevant to my thought, and began to find fresh questions and new perspectives.

I felt at first as if I were living in two worlds: one well known, the other new, exciting, and perplexing in turn, particularly as its inhabitants turned out to have the disconcerting habit of asking searching, perceptive questions about social work and its educational process. It dawned slowly that this world I knew so well might not in reality look as I had perceived it, that I would need to look again, and divest myself of a set of assumptions of which I was barely aware. I wondered if this was possible, yet once I admitted the possibility that things were not always as I assumed new questions came.

Looking back I can see that I have been greatly influenced by the ethos of the department and by particular aspects of its teaching. I valued particularly Liam Hudson's refreshing attitude to the University system and thinking about intelligence and creativity³, Peter Sheldrake's expertise in participant observation together with his emphasis on the interaction between researcher and material, and Malcolm Parlett's interest in evolving a methodology for evaluating innovation in education which takes account of/...

of reality and muddle.⁴ The frank sharing of experiences, the emphasis on reality, as well as the many sessions devoted to the problems of beginning research, "getting in", "staying in", interviewing, confidentiality, choice of methods, etc. helped me to relate much of what I already knew about relationship to the objects of research. Perhaps most important of all was the realisation that there are no easy answers, no body of revealed truth on the subject, "no tablets on the mountain" when it comes to doing research in this field.

Nevertheless, the world of social work research, then and indeed still, felt different. There was preoccupation with measurement, scientific method, and sample size. Noel Timms, writing a review article in the British Journal of Social Work in October 1971⁵ outlines crucial requirements in relation to recent experimental studies of social work practice. These must include reliable and valid measurements of conditions before and after the "treatment", random sampling of cases, measurement of treatment dosage, establishment of criteria for success, and a means of connecting outcome to the "treatments" given. A recent British study, "Helping the Aged" by E.M. Goldberg⁶ welcomed as a real step forward in social work research, is a field study using such a scientific paradigm. It aimed to ascertain the social and medical conditions of a sample of elderly people newly referred to a Welfare/...

Welfare Department by comparing the services received by those needing them, and evaluating the relative effectiveness of the trained as against the untrained social workers involved. In my view the study achieves its aims in relation to the description and quantification of the services received, but not in respect of the evaluation of the success or failure of the professional workers. Here the model seems inappropriate for the task.

However, such views ran contrary to current thinking in the profession. "Scientific evaluation" was the theme of a further article in the next issue of the same Journal,⁷ and it was therefore with considerable relief that I encountered an article in the Journal for Education in Social Work called Social Work, Knowledge and Social Responsibility by Henry S. Maas⁸ which highlighted the need for wider perspectives for social work. An interesting section on social work and research stressed the paucity and negative attitudes of current research, the gap between consumer and researcher, and the relevance of recent sociological thinking with emphasis on participant observation and evaluative studies. It formed a link for me between the two worlds.

In essence it was not an accumulation of facts which I gained, although, "windows" were opened for me; rather it was a more focused ability to ask questions, to question assumptions both my own and others, to isolate/...

isolate essentials, and to look at people and situations from a number of standpoints valuing the illumination which one sheds in relation to another. The opportunity to have a course outwith social work, to have my assumptions and bias questioned, to look at my project against a background of thinking about research into education in other spheres and professions, has put my concerns into a wide context which has been tremendously valuable. I have had something which I had not anticipated, an educational experience which I found both stimulating and absorbing.

It is important, however, to draw attention to the pressures inherent in this adventure. It is open to question whether I would have been further on with a project if I had remained within my own discipline. Certainly I would have been much the poorer, though the achievement of wider understanding took time. I tended to attribute any difficulties which I experienced in the first term to my problems about change of role and authority, rather than to the realistic external difficulties. By January 1972 however I was seeking to examine my experience from differing perspectives. A diagram I drew then gave an indication of three levels of tension, the organisational, the inter-group and the personal. Organisational tension existed in the sense that my programme had been outlined by the Faculty Post Graduate Studies Committee, and all who had consented to participate were bound by University authority and expectations. I realised/...

realised that different people had different attitudes to that authority. Inter-group tensions proved difficult in that Social Administration and "Educational Sciences" made assumptions about each other which were often different from reality. There was unease as to where responsibility for me lay. My supervisors were in one department and my research course in another, and I tried to belong to both. Personal tensions arose for me in that this experience drew attention to my difficulties in dealing with triangular situations where expectations seemed divergent. Much therefore has depended upon my capacity to contain anxiety, to integrate or allow for a variety of views, and to evolve a research design which was meaningful to me as a social worker.

The process of withdrawing from practice to review my knowledge and see the problems afresh seemed to be the reverse of that of most of my fellow students who were beginning to explore new areas of interest for the first time. The problem for me was not one of rushing into observational activity, but of getting far enough away to allow myself to "see the wood from the trees", of isolating the central problems before looking again. I needed time to look selectively at my colleagues' views, obtained through interviews, informal contacts, and participant observation in group discussions. I needed to sample student opinion, although this was only possible in a very informal way, but contact at parties, in the library, on bus rides, and at an informal meeting convened by/...

by a small group all contributed understanding. I needed contact with tutors, and again this was informal, but it is important to be aware that alongside the material presented here ran a series of informative question posing contacts which have aided my exploration, a stage in research which is beginning to receive more attention in social work.⁹

To return then to the problems of the research itself. I set out with a series of questions about the nature of fieldwork teaching which I now realise rested on a variety of axes and had little focus. If students spent sixty per cent of their time in social work agencies what did they do there? The first questions looked as follows:

What is the nature of the total fieldwork experience of any student?

How does he spend his time in the agency?

Does the fieldwork teacher (often called the supervisor) regard herself as an educator?

How is she equipped, and what are her own learning needs?

To what extent is the student's learning influenced by agency structure and practice?

What is the content and focus of teaching sessions in the agency?

What part does the supervisory relationship play in enabling personal growth?

Where/...

Where does the line between treatment and education lie?

What common transference/counter transference situations have arisen, and how are they usually handled?

How does the relationship between the University tutor and the fieldwork teacher influence learning, and what is the focus and nature of their communication?

To what extent do fieldwork teachers' and students' views of the effectiveness of the supervisory process differ?

"Governmental language", "strange sentence constructions" "you can't believe this is what really happens", were the responses which greeted my first attempt to convey on my research course what happened in social work education, and I retreated to have a further "think" and to review the literature and published research on the subject.

The Search for a Research Design 1971/72:

Reading served to keep my anxiety at bay but the problem of the design of the study was never very far from my mind. The development of signs of wider interest in this area had not yet occurred, 1971 was the year when it began. Indeed all my efforts to trace similar current work then were failures and Tilda Goldberg writing from the National Institute described the subject as "an untilled field". I felt it was important after this initial survey of the literature to question whether my original/...

original concerns mirrored those of other fieldwork teachers.

I decided to explore how a small number of social workers of differing background experience, and working in different agencies, viewed the business of teaching fieldwork practice. I interviewed ten social workers who were experienced in the following fields:

General hospitals (4)

Local Authority Social Work Departments (2)

Psychiatric hospitals (2)

Child Guidance Clinic (1)

Voluntary Agency (1)

Those working in the general hospitals as well as in the voluntary agency had trained as medical social workers, those in psychiatric hospital and child guidance clinic as psychiatric social workers, and those in the local authority as probation officers. All were known to me as experienced fieldwork teachers on the Scottish scene, all were caseworkers, and all except three worked with the Edinburgh University Course among others. The interviews were unstructured and I tried not to influence what was raised. The interviewees knew I was interested in supervision and was exploring their ideas before formulating a research design.

The results were very interesting. I got an enthusiastic response, but these workers talked with markedly more confidence about their agency function and client service than they did about the process of student/...

student supervision. They dealt with me very differently, but I clearly aroused anxiety. In only two cases was a tape recorder acceptable and that after some negotiation, but people talked freely and at length. All seemed glad that their problems were to receive attention, and some common ground emerged.

It was very important to them all that students felt welcomed in the agencies. All gave richly to their students in terms of care and time. Each student received a minimum of one and a half hours individual supervision weekly, had a carefully selected caseload geared to individual need as it was perceived, and participated in regular group or inter-departmental discussions. All were concerned about the nature of their relationship with the university or college, the selection of students for training, the particular nature of their agency, its often very specialist function, and the ways in which this influenced the experience which they could offer. Most expressed anxiety about their uncertainty as teachers, or their lack of knowledge of teaching methods, and felt a need for more help in this area.

Supervision, the individual sessions held weekly and seen as the focus of the teaching/learning relationship, brought varied responses. Some stressed the emotional aspects of learning and personal growth, whereas others stressed content and methods of teaching. Some were very coherent about the process as they saw it, others were/...

were not, and it was not always clear that we were talking about the same thing. Aims varied apparently, and the line between treatment and education was placed firmly by different supervisors in different places. This they related both to their personal competence and to the different attitudes of different courses. Views on the handling of transference varied, and only one supervisor mentioned counter transference as a problem, or indeed at all. One supervisor did not know what it was.

Other matters which came up regularly were related to day to day practice. It was clear that agency practice varied considerably as did the criteria for selection of suitable cases for students. Workers did not always understand the methods and nature of work in each others' agencies, and some made quite inaccurate assumptions about the way the social workers functioned in neighbouring agencies from which students were regularly taken. The records which supervisors kept about their contact with students varied widely from "in the head" to notes and diagrams in notebooks, ("quite incomprehensible to you, I'm afraid"), to one well kept interesting set which I was shown.

Attitudes to the university or college and its expectations were fairly divergent. Some felt that the university KNEW what it was at, and that if their work with students was unsatisfactory they would be told. They had confidence in the evaluation and grading system, and the criteria by which these were achieved were meaningful./...

meaningful. One said, "you recognise the land when you get there". Others, however, held different views: they doubted the university's knowledge and wisdom in this area, and had particular doubts about the evaluative and grading system. They were critical of the criteria, and felt a need for more discussion of shared aims. With respect to the content of the course for which they were teaching, some felt that they knew what it was and could relate to it, whereas others doubted that they did, and felt that they relied too heavily on the student's interpretation of this. Not all could say what in particular they felt they taught, nor what their agency specially contributed. Several expressed anxiety at not understanding object relations theory.

These interviews untidied my idea that I knew what supervisors did and what their aims were, though they supported my sense of need to look at practice. Before doing them I thought I knew what the aims were, now I doubted that I did. The variety of view expressed, the semantic difficulties encountered, the evident unease which exploring and putting into words this process caused, resulted in further thought on my part as to how to examine it.

Something should be said here about the constraints which I felt were operating. My early assumption that being known as a concerned fieldwork teacher would be to my advantage seemed less happy. I felt I was seen as knowledgeable, and therefore posed a threat. Some responded/...

responded to previous knowledge of me, or saw me as a well known social workers within the professional association. Some had not tried to put their practice into words so clearly before and found it very difficult. What seemed a simple question to me because I had been thinking about it was threatening or impossible for a colleague who had not had cause to think in this kind of way. Finally it seemed clear that supervision was regarded as a highly individualised teaching/learning relationship which I could not observe without affecting the interaction, and about which they felt very sensitive.

This led me to re-examine records of my own, kept for field teaching purposes, of my interaction with students over eight years, a total of fifty one students in all. I reasoned that my records were neither better, worse nor markedly different to those of others in that we had talked of much that was common. My records had the virtue of existing, in type, in my possession. I also had detailed process records written by the students about their contacts with patients which might illumine my records. I thought that an examination of a number in depth might at least provide a basis for further speculation. It was in any case important to find a way of using such records before asking colleagues to keep some for me, as I feared in view of the variety of records kept that I could end up sitting on a mound with which I could do very little. To use my records in the actual study poses problems of validation, though these might be resolved/...

resolved by the use of independent judges. I decided to leave this issue for the present and to share the thinking which emerged from the initial exploration which influenced the eventual shape of the study.

The records vary in length and detail. Unfortunately as I became more experienced they diminish in size. Entries are usually weekly records of the supervisory session with the student. I looked carefully at ten records in all, five for students in their first placements and five for those in their second. On examining the content of each entry I discovered that there were consistent perceptions recorded in the following five groupings:

1. The student's feelings or behaviour.
2. Problems and successes in work with patients.
3. Broad statements about the content and focus of teaching.
4. My judgements of the student's performance and progress.
5. Action initiated either by the student or myself.

There was a little recorded about my feelings in the relationships, and the student's exact words are recorded on occasion. It is a record of my perception of the relationship.

For each student record I extracted and coded (inevitably rather roughly) the observations noted in the five main groupings and charted them on a squared chart, so that I had in effect a series of "pictures" of the/...

the contents and the relationships over time of one set of observations to another. It is difficult to apply sophisticated methods to raw source material which was not kept originally for research purposes, and I realise that there is much that is open to question. There were, however, interesting possibilities suggested which are worthy of mention and may justify a later attempt to refine the process. A diagram of a resulting chart is appended. (See Appendix A).

Interesting material emerged in relation to the students' feelings as they began to grapple with the placements. All had swings of feeling from depression to relative elation, as well as periods of high anxiety. The anxiety seemed to be associated with beginning and ending placements, and with depressive swings. Swings to the depressed end of the spectrum were associated apparently with feelings of failure with patients, usually in feeling communication such as anxiety, anger or depression. They also seemed related to what for want of a better expression I have called developmental anxieties, those arising from a personal application of Human Growth and Behaviour theory, or to an aspect of self highlighted by contact with a patient; this extended to difficulty within the supervisory relationship itself where fears regarding dependency, authority and transference featured. Other factors apparently important were external to the course such as a family death.

Swings to the happier end of the spectrum were less notable/...

notable and seemed to be characterised by less extreme feeling. Confidence, enthusiasm for learning, pleasure and a sense of being helpful to patients predominated. An experience of competence, however small, was important, as was the growing ability to achieve good communication with patients. The capacity to accept limits, and to accept and use feeling constructively in helping seemed relevant.

It seemed, looking at these ten "pictures", that there were more swings during the first placement, and progress often seemed associated with a period of depressed feeling, following which the focus of work in supervision was both on the student and the patient. It seemed characteristic of the first placement that responsibility for the interaction rested with the supervisor, and that the focus was almost completely on the work being done with the patient. In the second placement swings in feeling were less evident, the focus shifted to be on both student and patient together, and the responsibility for initiative in the relationship changed hands to the student, or at least was equally shared.

It would only be possible to pin point areas of broad teaching from these records as the detail is not recorded. It seemed that much of the time in the first placement was spent in discussion of the patient's feelings, and in enabling the student to get in touch with these. Difficulty was experienced in allowing patients to express feelings of anxiety, depression, anger or hostility. Dependency/...

Dependency could be a problem too, and there was marked reluctance to allow that illness may represent a failure in functioning with which help may be needed. Second placement problems tended to focus more on diagnostic issues, and reflected anxiety about passing judgement and accepting the limits imposed by the patient's capacity and motivation.

There is evidence too of anxious teaching, in that in two cases I became caught up in the depressed feelings of the student, and became very negative about their work. Questions raised themselves in my mind about the nature of the relationship, and the differences and similarities between an "educational" as opposed to a "therapeutic" relationship. It began to emerge as a difference in focus rather than one of skill.

The extent to which the swings I described are related to the supervisory relationship and the learning within the agency is open to question, though this was how I first interpreted them. It seems rather that they may be related to the whole process of "becoming" a social worker, but awareness of them and the patterns in which they normally occur in social work learning could promote better understanding and teaching in the field. Other professions have noted them and a good example and description within the nursing world is recorded in 'The Silent Dialogue' by Virginia L. Oleson and Elvi W. Whittaker.¹⁰ This is a participant observation study of nurses in training of which the authors write:

'if/...

'if there is a single theoretical position in this book it is that of symbolic interaction, a position that permits analysis of the students' existential encounters, in which the students defined, chose and acted upon their choices¹¹.'

Their observation of the swings is remarkably similar although the students' learning took place outwith any "one to one" relationship. The emphasis on psychodynamic understanding, self awareness and relationship with patients within this nursing school is recognised as being atypical and has much in common with social work. In this study the swings are interpreted in the context of role change, identity predicaments and legitimation, as a consequence of which the student attempts to or is forced to integrate self with role. They quote Becker in support of their view of a structural explanation of personal change.¹²

Charlotte Towle writes of goal striving and the feelings of incompetence which beset the beginning social worker,¹³ and similar references can be found in relation to theological training, librarians' training, and painting.¹⁴ If it seems unsatisfactory to leave this at this point for the present, it is only because this is the stage which my thinking then reached. The problems of validating my charts, of attempting to analyse others' records by similarly searching out their own internal consistency, and the theoretical interpretation of results have yet to be thought through, but the exercise served to/...

to emphasise the inter-relatedness of class and field and caused me to think afresh about the difficulty of 'splitting off' the fieldwork experience from the total process of the Course.

It was at this stage in my thinking that I gave a seminar which served the purpose of reminding me of my uncertainty of focus, and resulted in a certain amount of pressure to formulate a research design. I had previously formulated five, (they rescued me from anxiety at intervals) but rejected each in turn as it became clear it was not practicable. This time the pressure resulted in a paradigm which aimed to focus first on the facts, assumptions and values of fieldwork teachers, tutors and students in relation to fieldwork experience. It was to be illumined by a study of practice, using perhaps my own records or similar material if it could be obtained - or some other analysis of the process supposing I could find a way of doing this and of getting the necessary data from other fieldwork teachers. Innocently I thought I could deal with a questionnaire to fieldwork teachers, tutors and students on the facts and assumptions governing practice before I had settled my focus in relation to the process itself. It was not to be. A questionnaire certainly emerged, and grew longer and longer; the answer to not knowing what exactly to ask lay in asking everything I could think of. It reminded me of a wheel with spokes lying in all directions because the hub was missing. The hub, the focus, seemed to elude me. It seemed that the descriptive material which would result from my questionnaire/...

questionnaire, while interesting, would not enable me to understand the root of the problem which fieldwork teaching seemed to pose, and left me with a nagging awareness that the uncertainties expressed by those I had interviewed needed closer study.

Perhaps mercifully a holiday intervened, and on my return it seemed as if I began to fall over the obvious. It was the charts which gave me the clue. Looking at them again I saw them as pictures of relationships, focused much of the time on feeling issues. Relationships in which the recognition and acceptance of their feelings enabled the students to integrate their thinking/feeling selves in a way that was helpful to others. The aims were educational, but were the skills I used? I had learned casework skills first and later encountered education. Now I sometimes gave things educational names, but suppose the skills I used were the same underneath? As I thought of my caseworker colleagues, and of the skills which they too had learned, it seemed obvious that these must be the skills mainly used.

Once I assumed that the skills were the casework skills we all shared, the problem could be stated differently. It was not how could caseworkers learn teaching skills, but how could they apply known skills in a different context. And more importantly, and usually overlooked in our enthusiasm to convince them that they could teach, where did the assumptions and constraints differ when the focus was educational as opposed to therapeutic?/...

therapeutic?

The relationship with a client is professional, client focused and for the purposes of treatment. The client has a problem which may lie in a range of areas from environmental to inter-personal. The relationship with a student is also professional, the aim being 'to develop the learner's capacity to think anew, so that eventually he may modify, or depart from, the thinking and doing of his mentor'.¹⁵ The problems are externally posed for the student by the course, but the student may need help in learning to relate constructively to these. The focus is usually seen as being on the student's work.

Different assumptions operate in these two situations. In the client's case his strengths are in question, and diagnosis precedes joint planning in relation to the nature and length of the contract, as well as the establishment of goals. In the case of the student it is assumed that he will have strengths sufficient for the necessary learning, and the diagnosis (or educational assessment) of these occurs within an already externally defined contract, in which the purpose, length and goals are deemed to be clear. The expectations governing success with the client arise from within the relationship, whereas for the student they are again externally defined in large measure. It is true that time constraints and external expectations operate in some client situations, for example within the Probation Service, but they are perhaps/...

perhaps more usually related to some estimate of the client's capacity, rather than to a defined programme. It is assumed that all students will succeed, that the purpose is clear, that the component teaching is understood, and that the stages in learning are recognisable. Further, it would be usually assumed too that the final goal is identifiable and shared between fieldwork teachers and the university tutors. Also that the university staff understand and recognise these stages in the process, and are clear about the end result.

Conflict arises at this level for several reasons. Firstly, most students have difficulties at some stage in the course, and lie nearer the middle of the spectrum than the assumptive pattern warrants. Secondly, the purposes, means and ends are often not clear, nor perhaps can they be, and this is insufficiently recognised within the profession. Thirdly, the external constraints require success, and the possibility of failure raises problems for the fieldwork teacher and the course staff who have selected and judged the student potentially capable.

The 'treatment' dilemma seems to occur when there is student failure in relation to the assumptive pattern. It is usually described in terms of not 'caseworking' the student, and the fieldwork teacher is warned about the dangers of attempting to 'treat'. At first sight this is confusing advice as it seems that it is permissible to use a range of methods with the student which if used with/...

with a client would clearly be labelled 'treatment'. Some writers, for example, Pettes¹⁶ and Hammond,¹⁷ relate casework skills to supervision, and to the Hollis categorisation of treatment procedures¹⁸ as an example of the analogy. These treatment procedures are summarised as follows:

1. The sustaining procedures.
2. Procedures of direct influence.
3. Catharsis or ventilation
4. Reflective consideration of the current
person-situation configuration.
5. Reflective discussion of the dynamics of
response patterns or tendencies.
6. Reflective discussion of the genetic
development of response patterns or
tendencies.

These are the categories of direct treatment procedures, and anxiety about their use with students rears its head when number five is reached. The previous methods are felt to be acceptable. It now appears to me, however, that it is not the use or non-use of a treatment method which is the problem here, rather it is the use of techniques in relation to goals. It does not seem to be the techniques which differentiate between an educational and a treatment relationship, but the primary focus of that relationship. If the primary focus is educational the methods used will be those related to the fieldwork teacher's perception of the educational task, which I suggest/...

suggest varies considerably. 'Treatment' then could be thought to be involved at differing points depending on the perception of the educational aims.

This view of the skills used within the supervisory relationship is not universally held, and the literature reflects some degree of confusion. Pettes, for example, explicitly states that supervision and casework are different, and goes on to say

'the skills used in supervision are very similar to, but they are not the same as, those used in casework' ¹⁹

Dark hints about the danger of confusing the two follow, but she goes on to show how casework skills may be used in supervision. Kent writes:

'there is something of teaching and helping in both casework and supervision; caseworkers often fail to recognise how much they teach their clients about themselves and their environment. Because much of casework is teaching and because much of supervision is enabling, experienced practitioners can transfer the knowledge and skill which they have acquired in the field and bring it to bear in understanding the process of supervision'.²⁰

Lola Selby, writing on the three fold function of the fieldwork teacher as administrator, helper and teacher, sees this as a progressive series of phases concerned historically with different aspects of the task. She describes the current phase as the educational one, but sees/...

sees all three aspects as being closely related.²¹

Tropp²², in an interesting article on Authenticity in Teacher-Student Communication writes

'As far back as 1942 Bertha Reynolds pointed the way to a genuineness of person in the teacher that respected a corresponding genuineness in the student. Charlotte Towle, 12 years later, emphasised that help to a student was not therapy and also offered a plea for a more realistic approach. How is it then, that in 1967, we find Dorothy Pettes still referring to the fear of the supervisor "caseworking" the worker as one that "haunts both supervisor and worker to this day" and in 1968, Alfred Kadushin still talking about the "equivocal boundaries between supervision and therapy" ?'

This thinking about the skills and methods used in supervision open up another way of examining the fieldwork teacher's role in the process. Interesting work has already been done by Hollis,²³ Reid,²⁴ and Shyne²⁵ on the nature of the caseworker's interventions with individual clients. Reid, in an article 'Characteristics of Casework Intervention' records his findings that in casework with individuals in relation to family problems, the activities consisted largely in exploring the client's problems and feeding in formulations to improve understanding, work which would fall mainly in the first four of Hollis categories of treatment procedures.

'The findings sharply contradict the view that development/...

development of the client's insight into his personality function and dynamics is a major modality in casework treatment'.²⁶

The style differences between the methods of different caseworkers loomed large as a factor within the study. The implications of findings such as these could usefully be explored in relation to supervisory activity, perhaps the 'treatment' issues might be seen to be in large part a paper tiger.

In summary, it now seems clear to me that the assumptions, expectations and values governing the process of supervision are of supreme importance to the understanding of practice. At the root of the problem lie uncertainties about role and about the skills and methods to be used in relation to ill defined educational aims. Much inevitably in a situation of rapid change must remain uncertain, but it seems at present that each fieldwork teacher operates in relation to a private model of social work, and that what is then seen to be essential in training depends upon the nature of that model.

Pursuing this track, I took time to listen to a series of taped sessions of supervision, one series taped by myself and another by a colleague. I used the Reid typology already referred to and found what I expected, namely that each intervention made by the supervisor was easily codeable in these terms. This felt strangely unsatisfactory however, for it took no account of the transactional nature of the relationship. It told me something/...

something about the supervisor's activity but nothing meaningful about the student's role. My thinking here was sharpened by material gained from participant observation in a group of beginning supervisors who were exploring the educational expectations of the University for the first time. Listening to the group discussion I heard young social workers begin to struggle with their feelings and ideas about social work education, to re-explore the meaning of their own experiences, and find ways of relating expectations to their own agency practice. The concept of skilled practice received much more attention than that of the educational role, and I heard little that would help with the latter. It seemed that the group finished with an enhanced confidence about their individual capacities to function but little concomitant sensitivity to the implications of an educational role. The ground for the continuance of an almost apprenticeship type of student experience seemed well laid.

It was at this point that I returned to document data gathered in the interviews with supervisors already described, and set it against material obtained informally from the student group. It amply confirmed my view that the supervisors' activity was conditioned to a high degree by the casework skills and method familiar to them. For example:

'She saw supervision as being like a relationship with a patient, it was important to grapple with something/...

something difficult and it was this aspect of learning through relationship which she emphasised':

'what the contract is about is what supervision is. I think what it will begin to sound like is like a relationship between a social workers and a client, and I don'tt frankly think it is specially a very different thing':

'she said she made an assessment, looked guilty and commented that this was a casework assessment, at least it is very similar and she employed, she said, the same skills and process.'

The student's experience, recorded on this occasion at a privately convened and anonymous meeting to which I was invited, felt remarkably like the other side of a by now familiar coin.

'Several people present clearly felt that they had communication problems and that they had not been understood. They felt that they were adults with a good deal of work and life experience and that this was not appreciated. Supervisors often treated them as if they were very young and all they were expected to do was to listen to what they were told and go and do it. It wasn't really education, just learning what was expected and pleasing them. You couldn't win anyway because everything was interpreted, and not necessarily in the way you meant when you said it./...

it. One said that she had sat through a lecture from her supervisor on a certain Trust, she had used it before but the supervisor hadn't bothered to ask, so she just sat through it. She would bear this in mind if she ever taught. Two others said that they felt sorry for their supervisor because they could see what made her anxious and so felt protective towards her - they just put up with things as they were because if they said anything it would hurt her.

'Anger was expressed early on about 'sharing'.

Tutors and supervisors keep saying 'do share with us' but it wasn't sharing they wanted, it was telling. They never shared anything and wanted to remain distant - you never met them in the pub and if you did you certainly wouldn't join them for a drink although no other course had been like this - you'd have felt OK to join staff for a drink.

Last term it had all been about feelings, it wasn't what you knew that mattered but what you felt - it raised a laugh even to mention it, and this term it was the same about sharing - say to another student do share it with me and it raised a real laugh. They talked of how this worked out - one said that he had once shared something important and it appeared as negative in his report.

Another said that the supervisor had gone on so much about this that in order to please, the student/...

student had made up an incident - the supervisor had been very pleased and things had gone very much better since. Another said it was useful to blow up something which didn't matter too much to please them, this had worked, and another said that to do what was advised in a case and then to report having done so was a good move, it was regarded as progress and things went much better. At intervals I think they realised that they were being rather paranoid but clearly felt that they were in a difficult situation and could not win. 'They threw doubts on the intellectual ability of supervisors they queried the psychoanalytic model on which they felt the course was based, they felt their wide sociological models were not appreciated they came back to the real need to get on well with supervisors. The very different ways in which their reports had been handled by their new supervisors caused perplexity - one said anxiously "it's difficult to know how to play the game, isn't it?" On the other hand they said that they felt pressured by the intensive nature of supervision, they felt they had to examine themselves, and be psychoanalysed and they wondered about the pressure on other courses. One said he had come on this course because he wanted a 'mini analysis'.

'And in July, the same group interviewed again added that/...

that they were very concerned, not now so much with how the staff saw them individually but with the fact that the staff in their view did not take sufficient responsibility for their own feelings in the relationship. They said that they felt that several of them had been caught in negative counter transference situations in which the staff had not accepted that the problem lay with them. They thought that staff generally were not sufficiently aware of counter transference.'

It was striking that neither students nor supervisors could talk for long before referring to the total course situation, they demonstrated a back and forth dialogue between course and field which did not reflect the field-work experience as a separate experience. This inter-relatedness of the material both added complexity, yet demanded attention, if the research was to reflect in any real sense the teaching/learning process.

Several facts were staring me in the face, or so it seemed. Social workers who were designated fieldwork teachers, or supervisors, used social work skills primarily within an educational contract; the extent to which the practice of supervision had been conceptualised by these workers was marginal; misperceptions were common, and ideas about the values and ethos of a course seemed to influence thinking about student handling. Last, and by no means least, there was incredible confusion of beliefs and/...

and ideas about standards and methods of evaluation in the field, accompanied by considerable uncertainty and diversity of view amongst tutors and fieldwork teachers about what they expected.

The following hypothesis occurred to me, rather I should say it emerged from the data, and was determined by it. It ran as follows:

that supervision is a valid educational method involving the whole person in problem focused learning within a relationship.

that the focus of the relationship is educational, and the skills and methods used relate to the supervisor's view of the educational aims.

that these aims vary.

that the skills primarily used are social work skills, learned for use in therapeutic situations.

that the assumptions, expectations and constraints underlying the use of skills with clients and with students are different, and the implications insufficiently understood.

that the use of therapeutic skills in an educational context creates identifiable areas of strength, difficulty and conflict.

Access to the individual supervisory session was clearly not going to be possible; both students and supervisors regarded it as a highly personalised learning relationship. Nevertheless, the frankness with which both groups were prepared to talk in more general terms meant/...



meant that it was possible to gain insight into their relationship and an overview of their problems which suggested interesting patterns. I determined to attempt to encompass the complexity of the total system rather than "split off" the field experience for attention, and proposed 'a descriptive study which would focus primarily on the nature of supervision, set in the context of a wider understanding of the interrelated patterns of activity amongst tutors, supervisors and students'.²⁷

The proposal submitted to the Department at Edinburgh University continued:

'I plan to collect information by the use of semi-structured interviews in depth supported where necessary by short factual questionnaires, and if agreed by participant observation of significant aspects of the social work course. I would like to interview all supervisors involved in the 1972/73 course, together with tutors and a sample of the students, dependent of course on individual agreement to participate. I would also like to have access to the following areas of work if possible:

regular supervisor/tutors meetings in which week to week developments are reviewed and progress identified in respect of individual students.

Student/staff assessment meetings in which ideas and problems are shared.

any/...

any policy/planning meeting to which I might be admitted.

the initial week, and a social work methods group plus possibly a number of Human Growth and Behaviour classes.

I would like to take advantage of the further opportunities for communication with the various groups as they emerge, acquiring this kind of background information on a participant observation basis'.

It seems to me now, as indeed it did then, that this combination of unstructured material, some of it obtained in relation to a participant observation stance, is the most real way of attempting to reflect the current practice and problems of supervision.

CHAPTER II

Chapter II - A Review of the Literature

"Supervision is as much a living growing thing as social work itself. No perfect system for all time, exists anywhere like social work it has to be of native growth, always closely in touch with its own community and culture".¹

This chapter deals with the emergence of ideas about supervision as they have developed in social work education in this country. A study of this "living growing thing" reveals that whilst fundamental principles of education were established here under the aegis of the Charity Organisation Society, the increasing sophistication of thought and practice owes much to the impact of developments in America and to the steady two way flow of social workers across the Atlantic from the 1920s onwards. It is difficult to understand the tenor of change in one country apart from that of the other. My aim, however, is to highlight the characteristics of the British approach set in the context of a background awareness of progress in the States, and to pay particular attention to the American literature only as it is reflected in that of Britain. In what can here only be an overview of developments since the 1890s I have been necessarily selective.² What follows is a brief account of the factors contributing to the foundation of social work education in this country together with an examination of the development of thinking and practice in four phases:

1./...

1. Supervision as training - first principles.
2. Supervision as helping - the stage of prophecy.
3. Supervision as education - the stage of experimentation.
4. Supervision as responsive environment - the stage of establishment.

It will be seen that the problems first encountered in planning for practice orientated education remain endemic and the questions and attempts at solution are considered. Gaps in the literature are identified, and the paucity of research in this area noted. Particular attention is paid to such studies as do exist both here and in the United States, and the relevance of these to this study receives attention.

The early social work schools arose simultaneously in London, Amsterdam, Berlin and New York:

"In the West, the first schools sprang up independently of each other, and there were few contacts between them. The schools in London and New York had fraternal contacts, since both were sponsored by the local Charity Organisation Society, but there are no signs that the schools in London, Amsterdam and Berlin influenced each other - in fact, they hardly know about each other.³

Yet despite the "fraternal links" referred to, the English developments grew directly out of the local events of the period and have a relatedness to their context which resulted in a realistic appraisal of training problems which/...

which still have a modern ring. British writing throughout tends to have a directness, practicality and sense of urgent reality which is both characteristic and refreshing, and to have been underpinned by educational ideas as familiar to us in 1975 as to our predecessors in 1894.

In turning my attention then to the British literature and context I think it is important to do so in relation to the pattern of events in the United States. I do not plan to expand these extensively here, merely to remind us of their significance. There are three particularly apposite sources of compact information. A very useful historical perspective on social work practice theory is that of Goldstein.⁴ He traces the theoretical issues in social work education from the foundations of American social work practice in 1870 to the present day, and provides an overview which is helpful to an understanding of the whole; and to the themes and preoccupations which are reflected subsequently in the British journals and writing. He comments:

"The origins of social work as regards intentional theory development were not unlike the origins of other professions. The apprenticeship approach was also characteristic of the beginnings of medicine, law and pharmacy, for example. In these cases, neophytes worked with experienced professionals or "read" to prepare for eventual confirmation of professional/...

"professional skill by a licencing body.

"However, social work more resistantly and belatedly moved towards a type of professionalisation that was based on the learning of a knowledge and theory foundation. Various conditions delayed this important aspect of the profession's maturation.

At first social work regarded itself as a vocation.

Because of its practical operations this perception was not entirely erroneous. However, this

predisposition tended to persist even when the

need for academic preparation became apparent.

Schools of social work were, for too many years, training centres, each operating independently.

The vocational orientation was sustained by reliance on field instruction as the mainstay for learning, while classroom content was either secondary or

ancillary. Although the balance between class and

field learning has shifted somewhat during the

past two decades, the complementariness between

the two remains. It is still not uncommon for

schools to place beginning students in the field

with little more than a basic orientation experience,

■ a plan that is a vestige of the apprenticeship

approach that denies the importance of academic

preparation for the actual practice".⁵

Nevertheless, looking back over almost a century of

development he views the present face of the profession in

the States as:

"a/...

"a diverse, creative and expressive discipline possessing the potentiality for meeting a whole complexity of human needs through a variety of services and an array of stratagems.⁶

Todd, in a two part article entitled "The Paradox in the History of American Casework" ⁷ traces the development of the work and influence of Mary Richmond, perhaps the most influential of the early writers there. Her introduction of the concept of social diagnosis created the possibility of more conscious focused study of the individual, a systematic collection of information which, if sufficient, would reveal a cause which in turn would respond to appropriate intervention. Essentially her vision transcended the practicality of the steps she outlined for practice; she introduced the idea of 'doing with' as opposed to 'doing for', and was sensitive to the dynamics operating within the family as a unit over and above the understanding of the individuals comprising it. She had a broad view of the aetiology of social problems, but social work in its enthusiasm for a set of rules or a way of proceeding, adopted the method and tended to ignore the vision. The link between the formulations of Richmond and the psychodynamic understanding of man developed by Freud was obvious⁸ and paved the way for the subsequent development of casework and an undue preoccupation with the intrapsychic rather than with the environmental bases of problems. It further introduced the notion of the social worker as the passive neutral responder in the model/...

model of developing psychoanalytic practice. By the mid 1920s Freudian thought provided the main theoretical basis for teaching casework in American schools, subsequently to be followed by those in Britain.

A third perspective on the development of fieldwork learning and teaching is provided by Heap in a recent study, "Supervisory Method in Social Work Teaching".⁹ The literature reviewed is largely American, and the emphasis is on the functions of supervision, the relationship of supervision to similar processes such as consultation, the patterns and problems of learning in social work, and the organisation, method and content of fieldwork supervision. Her conclusion is similar to my own, that there is an abundance of writing about fieldwork teaching and supervisory process through the years, both here and in the States, but a strange lack of research in the area. There is indeed much perceptive description, much analysis of the difficulties of supervising, much identification of student problems in learning, and much advice (some of it conflictual) on how to proceed. What is markedly absent, both here and in America, are studies of practice, of the relationship between Courses and field as they seek the desired integration of theory and practice and of the activities of the fieldteacher. What should be is easier to understand than what is.

In seeking, therefore, to identify the developing interest in the supervisory process in Britain I have attempted to reflect and convey, from a large and essentially/...

essentially fragmented literature, the balance of current thinking in each successive phase, and to demonstrate its relationship to events in the U.S.A. A historical overview is useful in the light it sheds on the total pattern of things, and the balance which this may lend to current perspective. Goldstein writes:

"Perhaps the most meaningful realisation is the knowledge that where the profession is now in its nature and function is, at once, a culmination of what has come before, and a preparation for what is to follow. An historical perspective dilutes the tendency to perceive the current state as static and encourages the valuing of what is as well as the vision of what can yet be. Thus doctrinaire and ideological rigidity can be averted and replaced by objective and innovative thought".¹⁰

The social context and currency of ideas within which social work in the more formal sense developed are important to understanding. De Jongh comments that:

"The first schools sprang up in western society around a society in which an advanced process of industrialisation had already created great wealth and great poverty, and in which a not inconsiderable group of citizens had concluded that strong measures were necessary to check human exploitation, to protect the socially disadvantaged groups, and to instigate a new welfare policy. A new, more scientific and better/...

"better organised approach to social problems was deemed necessary. In that context, the old philanthropic agencies had to be re-organised into social work agencies, and schools of social work had to be created to provide those agencies with trained workers. That is an important fact: the schools were created by existing agencies or at least by functioning groups of social workers".¹¹

To appreciate the work of these Victorian reformers Bell¹² stresses that it is necessary to understand that their view of the functions of the State were rather different to our own. In a chapter on the social conditions at the end of the nineteenth century, she draws attention to the conception of a beneficent Providence, guiding society to some desirable end. She comments that this belief in the forward movement of mankind and society was curiously strengthened by misunderstanding of the theory of evolution. The idea that the survival of the fittest meant the survival of the best led to the notion that eventually good would flourish.

"This comfortable theory matched very well with the Manchester laissez faire doctrine and in fact led to the view that the function of the State was to hold the ring while the individual made for himself the best life that he could".¹³

Bell believed that fundamentally the reformers accepted this thesis. Yet the debate on how to effect change was particularly alive then, as indeed it is in social work today./...

today.

"To many socially aware people a two-pronged approach seemed only natural: the general conditions under which people had to live should be changed, but at the same time people should be enabled to cope as much as possible with their actual problems of life. What we might call the societal change approach and the concrete help approach still seemed to be closely intertwined and conditioning each other".¹⁴

It was against such a background that the Charity Organisation Society was formed in 1869, the society which was to provide the beginning nucleus of trained workers in community and hospital, and to press for the formal organisation of training programmes.

Cormack and McDougall comment that it was not just another voluntary association which was being founded.

'They were out to remedy the evils of modern society'.¹⁵

They go on to quote from the writing of Edward Denison, a young reformer who in 1867 went to live in Philpot Street, off the Mile End Road. His work provided a vivid impression of the social context, together with an analysis of the social evils which concerned him. Here he built and endowed a school and taught in it at night; and in the day time looked after the sick, saw that nuisances were dealt with and housing repairs accomplished, kept the local authorities up to their work, and championed the poor who could not get themselves/...

themselves a hearing.

"He began by saying: 'I imagine that the evil condition of the population is rather owing to the total absence of residents of a better class there is no one to give a push to struggling energy, to guide aspiring intelligence, or to break the fall of unavoidable misfortune These are the sort of evils which, where there are no resident gentry, grow to a height almost incredible, and on which the remedial influence of the mere presence of a gentleman known to be on the alert is inestimable'.¹⁶

Later he says: 'What is so bad is the habitual condition of this mass of humanity - its uniform mean level, the absence of anything more civilising than a grinding organ to raise the ideas beyond the daily bread and beer, the utter want of education, the complete indifference to religion, with the fruits of all this, viz. improvidence, dirt, and their secondaries, crime and disease'.¹⁷

Later again he speaks of a 'sordid plutocracy', 'the usurpations of brutal ignorant wealth', and of the 'reckless extension and contraction of their business by the manufacturers. They are enabled to act in this way without serious loss to themselves, by the immense stock of surplus labour, on which they can always draw'. This leads him to find the root of evil in the congestion of/...

"of labour in the towns, the lack of a due balance of agricultural and manufacturing industry, and the need for prosperous agricultural labour.

Finally he asks why 'the flower of our workman emigrate', and answers himself: 'Not because they cannot get work But they prefer to leave a country in which the whole weight of custom, the whole might of law, is bent to dig deeper and deeper the gulf between rich and poor, of which the whole structure, industrial as well as political, is ingeniously framed to keep the bulk of the people in a stage of serfage, in which every attempt to mitigate the effects of this infernal conspiracy against humanity is solemnly anathematized by the Plutocratic Papacy, in the names - oh, blasphemy! - in the sacred names of Trust and Liberty.'" ¹⁸

Professor Marjorie Smith, in her book Professional Education for Social Work in Britain¹⁹ indicates that first ideas about training social workers stemmed naturally from the development of a number of activities. Foremost among these was the work of Octavia Hill in connection with her rent collecting plan (begun 1864) when she found it necessary to enlist the help of others as she could not do all the work herself: another was the work of the Women's University Settlement in Southwark where teaching of volunteers by lecture and discussion was/...

was introduced: additionally the concerns of the C.O.S., already involved in training workers for their district offices, were of fundamental importance. By 1895 the business of training volunteers had become an important part of the work of the C.O.S. District Committees.²⁰

Supervision as Training - First Principles

1894 provides the earliest known statement in this country on social work education. Professor Smith indicates that there are three key papers which stand out as historical documents in this early period. They are:

1. a paper on the training of volunteers read to the C.O.S. by Mrs. Dunn Gardner on November 26th, 1894.
2. a report of the Training Committee adopted by the Council of the C.O.S. in December 1898.
3. a paper by Helen Bosanquet, Methods of Training, read to the Society in 1900.

These papers are startlingly modern in preoccupation, and convey a grasp of principle and awareness of the realities and problems of beginning education for social work of which we can well remind ourselves. To enlarge further.

Mrs. Dun Gardner focuses particularly on practical work in ways very familiar to us. She emphasises the danger of using the student to get work done rather than for educational purposes. The student's introduction to the agency is seen as very important, the responsibility of the teacher being to engage his interest, to delegate appropriate responsibility, and to teach in a/...

a coherent 'whole' fashion rather than just giving bits of detailed instruction about specific errands. A delightful warning on the dangers of "killing off" volunteers is included:

"I can recommend the loan books as a very valuable extinguisher of enthusiasm - copying numerous begging letters on an old case long since closed except from a money point of view, is also not bad".²¹

Proper supervision which involved "a great deal of inspection" is described: 'in letter writing it may be a long time before any letter written by a newcomer can be sent out' and the practical experience in accompanying an experienced practitioner on her rounds is recommended. More practical knowledge she tells us "can be gained during one morning passed in the homes of the poor with a trained visitor, than in listening at the office to any amount of precepts about visiting". Reading is stressed, and the necessity for each office developing a small library of books relevant to the work is emphasised.²² That Mrs. Gardner knew social workers and their students is self evident, not least in another comment, as it were in passing, on the use of understudies by Head Workers 'the secretary might do well, I think, to caution them (the Head Workers) against making themselves indispensable'.

The other two papers develop the themes presented in the first. Central to the concern of the Training Committee,²³...

Committee,²³ and I suppose to every successor to in social work, is the

'essential importance of inculcating principles as early as possible in the education of a learner, impressing upon him that casework is mainly to be used as a means of organisation, and that the improvement of the conditions of the poor as a whole is a much nobler and more far-reaching object than the relief of a certain number of cases of distress.'

Surely we recognise the two fold dilemma presented here in its modern form; social work practice as an application of principle, and the problem of holding a balance between the needs of the individual and of society.

"Social work, Eileen Younghusband writes, has failed to come to terms with this dilemma At the present time, then it is touch and go whether or not social work will be split right down the middle, casework and community work".²⁴

Nevertheless, from that Committee writing in 1898, came principles of education which have stood the test of time. They tell us that "it requires the highest gifts of tact, judgement and ability, to awaken the curiosity and sustain the interest of the learner". Further, that education is about drawing out of the learner, "all that is in him", and they add with salutary force "The 'authority of the teacher', in so far as it prevents the learner from thinking for himself/...

himself and induces him to take upon trust principles which he does not fully understand becomes a real hindrance to growth. 'The scholler should know that he knoweth and take nothing upon trust' ". Progression in training, and the possible role of a university for the study of social science conclude their farseeing paper.

The third paper by Helen Bosanquet²⁵ takes a similar position, and develops ideas on methods of training with a competence and clarity that would benefit any beginning fieldwork teacher today. Reading it I felt I knew this woman and could identify closely with her; and how she knew students!

"If he is to be properly trained he must be made, at whatever cost of time and trouble, to restrain his enthusiasm for doing and overcome his reluctance to think ... 'There is too much real work to be done', one will say; 'I have no time for your books and theories'. It is very hard to make any headway against such a prejudice as this; to show the student that what we aim at is to make him more and not less practical". The prejudiced mind, the true aims of the work to 'raise our people into independence', reading and project work, the constructive use of old casepapers, and learning if possible from other people's mistakes all engage her comment, but it is perhaps in her passionate concern about conventionality that she speaks most clearly to us

"that/...

"that we keep the student from falling into anything like conventionality'. Conventional ways of classifying cases, conventional modes of help, conventional rules for making inquiries, all are dangerous, and especially dangerous in out work. It is comparatively easy to learn the little list of categories:

Not likely to benefit

Left to clergy

Poor Law case

Necessary information refused
and to class our case under it; what is more important and difficult to learn is how to keep to out of one of these classes, and this requires an insight to which every case is unique and individual to plan a scheme by which to raise a family to independence, to construct a raft for the shipwrecked applicant, out of a few shreds of character remaining to him and steer him safely to solid ground; this is work which no conventional tradition will help".²⁶

It might be easy to dismiss this in the light of the subsequently developed theories of social work practice - or is it? Perhaps more institutionalised than at any time in our history, social workers need to take heed to the dangers of convention. The concept of casework deriving from the early work of the C.O.S. from 1887 is also interestingly reviewed by Timms²⁷ in the British context/...

context and provides a useful complement to the glimpses given here.

That the principles of education outlined here as developing within the work of the C.O.S. were seen as crucial to the promotion of services is evident in an almost "missionary" open letter written by Sir Charles Loch, then Chairman, in 1909. The C.O.S. had been involved with the medical charities since its inception, and the abuse of teaching hospital outpatient departments had been under consideration by the British Medical Association since 1870. Loch's interest in and work for the sick poor is well recorded by Bell, as is the fact that the idea of using social workers in hospitals first came from him. It was as a consequence of his vision, and political skill, that the first Lady Almoner was appointed, in January 1895 for a three months' trial period, to the Royal Free Hospital. His letter to "Almoners at Hospitals" is interesting in this connection.

"I have no claim or authority to write to Almoners at Hospitals about their work, yet I venture to do so. I care about their work greatly. I think I understand the difficulties of it; and it is in a manner the child of my own thoughts.

So perhaps I may be pardoned if I write".

He makes a good practical case for the collection of social material in relation to individual cases of illness, relates this to the role and organisational position of the Almoner, and stresses the need for an appropriate use/...

use of the service. It is the organisation of the whole agency that affects "our learning and teaching".

"The learner, learning on these lines, starts with a different object. She has not to scurry after an impossible number of registered cases, but to learn to deal properly with a reasonable number. And her teacher will teach differently. Working herself on a field that is wisely limited she can teach really case by case, and show what she decides and why. She is not herself in a scurry - a mood in which neither teaching nor learning is possible".

Where these principles are not followed he warns:

"the result may be busy stagnation in a restless office. There may be much registering, some referring and some considering, but in the main the essential conditions of each case will not be grasped. There will be no feeling of security that what is done is rightly and effectively done. There will be all the difference between building on rock or building on sand".²⁸

Researching into social work education practice in 1972/73 I wonder whether we have sufficiently even yet learned these principles?

I have focused at some length on this beginning phase of education for social work in order to emphasise the recurring and complex nature of the dilemmas we still/...

still encounter, and because initial struggle with a problem can have a quality of clarity and directness which much subsequent theorising can obscure. The central problems of the boundaries and focus of social work, the relation of theory to practice and the integration of the two, the nature of the supervision and inspection desired, the quality of teachers needed, and the role of the student in learning are strikingly outlined.

The subsequent development of plans for more formalised professional education proceeded steadily and I do not propose to enlarge on the organisational issues here. The principles were significantly those already outlined and again the tale of the first proposals for co-operation between the universities and some agencies is told in 33rd Annual Report of the C.O.S.²⁹ Modern in outlook and content they pay an attention to the nature of the organisational relationship between course and field which we neglect today - I suspect to our peril.

Yet already the issue of fieldwork versus academic teaching was central to the debate. De Jongh comments on a Conference called in 1902 by the C.O.S.

"The well-known economist, Professor A. Marshall, thought in terms of broadening economic teaching to teaching on 'public well-being', but the opposition was strong. Some of it came from University people who stressed that the University should train the minds but that principles of action should be acquired elsewhere. There were even more opponents from/...

from the field who considered the universities in social questions 'amateurish and academic'. I hope this may help some people of today, 70 years later, to realise that not all their discussions are as new as they sometimes think!"³⁰

The development of the School of Sociology (1903-1916), of other social science courses, and of the eventual transfer of the School of Sociology to the London School of Economics is all documented elsewhere³¹, but the problems of the integration of principle with activity, of theory with practice, remain endemic. De Jongh further notes the curious fact that

"although beginnings of professional methods and methodological teaching were definitely in London, they have only been further developed in the United States. That may have been partly due to the influence of the Director of the School of Sociology, Professor J.J. Urwick, who, in his London period, already seemed to consider the confrontation with social problems mainly as a useful introduction to the main aim - social science teaching - and who, much later, was reported to take a 'dim view of field instruction' and to regard 'casework and especially psychiatry with not a little scepticism'".³²

Indeed as Professor Smith wrote of British social work education in 1963

"Professional education must be squarely based upon/...

"upon a scientific and theoretical content. Both the broader base and the technical training have been developing soundly but separately over the years. The final step of bringing them together must be made if the recurring circles of the past are to be broken".³³

The period from 1916 to the mid 1920s was one of increasing expansion and organisation. Recognition of the role of social work in the hospital service was developing, and in 1919 the first course for training Almoners outside London was established - in Leeds. 1920 saw the formation of the Association of Hospital Almoners. Published material in journal or other form is curiously absent in this period.³⁴ I imagine much of it may lie in the minutes of numerous small committees and societies. The history of almoning is an exception, and the war years plus their aftermath gave an impetus to development of social work services which Bell documents well.³⁵ There is little material on training available, though evidence of expanded numbers of candidates and workers is given.

To what extent the work of Mary Richmond had become known or began to have impact is not clear, but 1924 and 1925 saw the first of the major British migrations to America which were to contribute so significantly to the development of British social work. The Almoners, surprisingly, appear to have gone first! To represent the Association of Almoners at the Annual General Meeting of/...

of the Social Workers in America.

"As they talked they discovered, almost with surprise, that though conditions in America and Britain differed widely, and though medical social workers in the two countries approached their problems from entirely different directions, yet the ideals and methods which had evolved in the two countries were almost identical. This visit was a very important landmark and the starting point of the two-way traffic of social workers going to America

and of American social workers coming here".³⁶

The following year, 1925, as a consequence of the visit of Mrs. St. Loe Strachey, a young magistrate much influenced by the work of Cyril Burt, to America and her discovery of a promising new movement in mental hygiene called Child Guidance, Mildred Scoville of the Commonwealth Fund was invited to visit Britain as 'missionary for the new ideas'.³⁷ A generous offer was made to train a group of social workers who would subsequently return to Britain and found a demonstration clinic.

Six social workers eventually left amidst a flurry of concern about fur coats, steam heating etc.; one equipped with a silver tea service in her luggage, 'felt to give the entire group a distinct cachet'.³⁸ One wonders how this reflects the practical concern of British social work at the time. The new 'thing' was much under discussion/...

discussion on the boat. "It was generally understood to have something to do with psychology" and one member is recorded as "anxiously enquiring of her companions the difference between the teachings of Freud, Adler and Jung". Culture shock, fears of 'flunking', history taking to the third or fourth generation and ego-libido theory characterised the adventure. Perhaps with the passage of time, the experience has become idealised, perhaps not, but the following has an engaging appeal.

"The lectures were followed by merry tea parties in the hotel, adorned with angel cake and the silver tea service, when American and English girls eagerly discussed the mechanisms of behaviour. The "Ego-Libido Theory" was the 'current gospel' and the basis of both theoretical and practical work".³⁹

From this seed in 1928 grew the Islington Child Guidance Training Centre where five of the six struggled with British fears of 'newfangled' ideas, ("missionaries and teachers of a gospel so recently and imperfectly assimilated"), which were to provide the basis for the development of British psychiatric social work.

The steady development of the small professions of medical and psychiatric social work are outlined elsewhere.⁴⁰ As in America there was stimulus both from the opportunities arising post war and the development of the understanding of personality and mental health by Freud, Adler and Jung.

"Confronted/...

"Confronted with this new departure in the art of healing, the Institute of Almoners moved cautiously some understanding of psychological process must be of value to the Almoner".⁴¹

The Mental Health Course was established at the London School of Economics and by 1930 five almoners had completed training in mental health. The foundation of the Association of Psychiatric Social Workers at this time led to a split, some almoners frustrated by the administrative burden in hospitals and

"feeling too much restricted by the conservatism of the medical profession, preferred to train as psychiatric social workers, and work in the psychiatric field This tended to a division of almoners from psychiatric social workers, a division much regretted by many workers in each field today".⁴²

1930 saw the beginnings of Probation training but there appears to be little available published material on training for social work in the 30s and 40s.⁴³ Bell indicates that the institute continued to train throughout the period leading up to and during the War, (there were about 50 members in 1919, 343 by 1939)⁴⁴ whilst the number of psychiatric social workers continued to increase. The War itself and the period following it created wide opportunity and demand for social work help, the Institute creating postwar an emergency training course which/...

which trained 272 members in special conditions in the three year period from 1946-49.⁴⁵ Glimpses of the pattern of training on the Mental Health Course are given in Ashdown and Brown's 'Social Service and Mental Health',⁴⁶ and in the early issues of the Almoner, first published in 1948. It is easier to be certain of the developing interests and preoccupations of British social workers after this date as this period saw the development of a number of journals, The British Journal of Psychiatric Social Work and Case Conference in particular giving an indication of the state of play.

Training principles appear little different from those so ably presented by Helen Bosanquet in 1900. Progress seems to have lain in the direction of interdisciplinary thinking about education and in the focused attention which supervised practice was getting from an increased body of practitioners. The accounts offered are tantalizing in what they do not tell us, and carry an implicit assumption that methods have not yet changed much. Eighty social workers and university tutors met in Liverpool in 1948 for a long weekend:

"a series of interesting, stimulating and in some cases provocative lectures were provided and time was also available for some group discussion".⁴⁷

and at Dinton in 1949 they left

"realising how far most have to go before beginning to achieve the high aims and objects we have talked so much about, yet feeling that we/...

"we were setting our feet in the right road".⁴⁸

"Approaching the question of almoner training with humility" and setting out on "the right road" with suitably high aims seem characteristic of the writings of the time. Quite what that right road should or might consist of was another question ÷ one which began to loom large in the journal at this stage when unease both about the nature of helping and the consequent nature of training began to be questioned.⁴⁹

Preoccupations in social work tend to be thematic, and it is characteristic even today for there to be a four to five year gap between the American and the British scenes. I have already commented on the influence of developing dynamic psychology. Zetzel⁵⁰ comments on the role of dynamic psychology in progressive education and relates this to the importance of feelings and emotions in social work education, with particular reference to transference in the supervisory situation. The article is a good one lending clarity to the issues and an historical perspective to developments in supervisory practice in the 40s and early 50s. Bertha Reynolds,⁵¹ writing in 1942, saw the task of the supervisor when the student was made anxious by the demands or emotional impact of the work as

"To observe, to stand by, and to offer security and reassurance by placing emphasis on certain practical tasks until the student appears ready for further responsibilities based on emotional/...

"emotional growth".

It was, however, just this notion of emotional growth which was to arouse so much controversy and much of the subsequent literature on supervision attempts to deal with it. Perhaps it should be understood too in the context of the theoretical debate of the 40s and early 50s between the Diagnostic and Functional Schools of Social Work about the nature of man and of the helping relationship.⁵² Certainly the anxieties about therapy and casework, psychoanalysis and social work, ring a little strangely on our ears today, but they reappear again and again in the literature of the time. In the States the early 50s was a time when much was published on the subject of supervision, by then recognised as a valuable method for the development of both staff and students. Annette Garrett's, "Learning Through Supervision"⁵³ and "Techniques of Student and Staff Supervision", a collection of particularly interesting articles abstracted from Social Casework and published by the Family Service Association of America,⁵⁴ are characteristic of the period as is that classic of social work education by Charlotte Towle "The Learner in Education for the Professions".⁵⁵

The beginning doubts and unease about training patterns in Britain appear in the second year of publication of the Almoner. Joan Myers, writing on the Mature Almoner Student, hints at unease in respect of current training developments:

"It/...

"It is very possible that the older student with her already formulated experiences of human nature, may lose much of her natural and spontaneous ability to adjust herself to human relationships and become too analytical in her approach as a result of an over intensified training. Once it has been recognised that an older person has a well developed personality suited to almoning, then any further training should guard against an encroachment on her individuality by the imposition of too great a degree of scientific theorising and self analysis".

This concern is refuted in an article the following month with the comment that if these are the dangers for the mature how much greater are they for the young! ⁵⁶

The emerging dilemma for British social work education is summed up in an article written from America in 1948:

"Social work training here has adopted personality as its theme, and our studies are attuned to learning more and more about it, its mechanics, development, deviations from what is normal in this culture and its manifestations in health and disease. Sometimes one gets the feeling that the skills used by the worker might be better used in adjusting the situation to the client, whether through individual or community action".⁵⁷

It would appear that the dynamic understanding of man with its consequent implications for practice and education began/...

began to be felt here in the late 40s, but the nature of these implications, and how they should or might be handled is a debate which has continued to the present day. Suffice it to say that history was made by the Institute of Almoners in 1950 when they circulated to their membership a key resolution:

"This conference believes that almoners must accept increasing responsibility for trying to help patients with the personal as well as with the social problems associated with physical illness, that in their day to day contacts with, and casework for, patients they need not only a sensitive approach, but some understanding of human relations and behaviour, and that this should be acquired by study as well as by experience".⁵⁸

The voting is interesting:

For the motion	93
Against	2
Abstained	9
Papers not returned	20

In short, the principles of education first enunciated by the C.O.S. in the early 1900s had provided the basis for the development of training here up to the late 1940s. The principles have stood the test of time, but perception of the educational task gradually became complicated by the developing understanding of personality and personal growth which began to shift the emphasis from the intellectual/...

intellectual didactic reasoned approach to education to a comprehension of more subtle emotional process.

Supervision as Helping - The Stage of Prophecy.

Prophecy is used here in the biblical sense of telling or showing forth the facts or truth. Central to this phase are the debates about the nature of the helping relationship, its boundaries, and the implications of this understanding of man in relationship for education. The Gospel appeared in the main to be found abroad, in the U.S.A., in U.N. Seminars, in conferences. The ideas conveyed with almost missionary zeal and interesting clarity are a 'telling forth' of what is elsewhere, and indeed might be here - in time.

First and foremost the plea was for a strengthening and developing of the understanding of human personality and of casework skills. Topley, writing of "A Challenging Three Months in America"

"We must decide how to strengthen and develop our handling of the psychological aspects of social casework".⁵⁹

The Mackintosh Report, 1951⁶⁰ notes that in addition to a social science base students should have general training in casework "including psychology in living situations", and the need for more skilled casework is stressed among others in this phase by McDougall⁶¹, McGill⁶², Snelling⁶³, Nathan⁶⁴, Forbes⁶⁴, Rapaport⁶⁶, Howarth⁶⁷ and Huneaus⁶⁸.

The preoccupation with the need to develop new skills in helping led not surprisingly I think to a new concern with/...

with how to help students effectively, and the new insights inevitably began to have their impact on the teaching learning situation. Students should be encouraged to experience themselves as colleagues, "not working as apprentices but having time to discuss and think" and should be enabled

"to hold on to aims and principles, not do everything for everybody, develop their own individuality and work at their own pace".⁶⁹

They might even be encouraged to interview on their own! On the other hand they should guard against the trend in training which

"may unwittingly encourage in the student a tendency to develop into an untrained psychotherapist and to look for complexities in every simple service to the patient it is the insidious development of such an attitude of mind which is more dangerous and considerably more difficult to correct".⁷⁰

Rees, in an article on the Teaching and Supervision of Social Casework, quotes Cora Kasius of New York.⁷¹ She stresses that students must learn step by step, that they need helping with the simplest things first, and that with the right sort of supervision and experience they will acquire professional skill which will widen the range of services offered. The right sort of supervision and experience did and does prove difficult to define. Bartlett, on a visit to Britain in 1952 wrote:/...

wrote:

"We must discover how to develop in the student and practitioner through the educational process the necessary depth and breadth, and above all the capacity to keep on growing. We have not defined clearly enough the criteria to indicate how far a student may be carried in the school neither have we sufficiently defined the mutual and joint responsibilities of school and social service departments for producing the medical social worker adequate for practice of the future".⁷²

McDougall comments in the same year (1952) on the lack of research into education and social work practice.

Stressing the need for this she adds that:

"there is quite a lot of American literature on the subject of social work student supervision but not many social workers over here read it".⁷³

Supervision as a word had crept into the literature in this phase, but its meaning is rather obscure, it is not defined. The first attempt to really spell out the meaning and implications of supervision in the new image is contained in a report of a U.N. Seminar on the Teaching and Supervision of Social Casework, held in Finland in 1952, by Snelling.⁷⁴ Here the confusion between staff and student supervision first rears its head for clarification. Heap stresses that much confusion has resulted from the literature's inconsistency and/...

and lack of specificity where the status of the supervisee is concerned. In discussion of the functions of supervision she writes:

"Whether the supervisee has status as staff-member/colleague or as fieldwork student has considerable influence on the emphasis and priority accorded to the different component functions".⁷⁵

Snelling indicates that the seminar members:

"recognised that the two forms of supervision were essentially identical, apart from the greater stress put upon generic casework concepts in student supervision and the greater stress put upon specific local and technical factors in staff supervision".⁷⁶

Issues of status, function, accountability and process seem to me to be important in this dialogue. It is process which is emphasised here. It is, however, important to be clear that whilst there are similarities in process, the functions are different. It is important too that there was need to differentiate between the process of supervision and that of casework.

"Whilst there are very fundamental differences between the process of casework and the process of supervision, nevertheless both contained concepts of a dynamic relationship, of continuous and maximum participation by the two people involved, and of constant evaluation of progress by/...

"by the professional workers in each process".⁷⁷

She later defines the difference as:

"casework deals with troubled situations in which something has gone or is going wrong. Supervision is a normal teaching method based upon expectations of success without significant trouble".⁷⁸

The criteria for the good supervisor are spelled out in some detail. I have included them here because it is the first British statement on the matter, and interesting in the light of current and largely similar requirements.

The good supervisor should be:

"a good practitioner, secure in practice. He would need a knowledge of psychological theories, and might require to take extra courses in order to have the same basis of knowledge as modern students. He should be a mature person, able to give the leadership required without working out his own needs on the learner. He should have a real liking for people, and the capacity for a warm, supportive, steady relationship that remained controlled and professional. He needed to have understanding of himself and a capacity for self evaluation, if he was to help learners to acquire these in their turn. He should be identified with his agency's purpose and should feel comfortable within it, for a critical supervisor would produce an uneasy learner. He should be able to teach and should have knowledge of learning: he would need/...

"need some special skill in timing his teaching to the learner's stage, and he should not need to press the learner to his (the supervisor's) speed and method. He should be able to recognise the general in the particular. He must have a learning attitude in every situation. He needed to be secure in dealing with loyalty claims from many different directions at the same time".⁷⁹

The organisational and administrative resources which this paragon would require to operate, together with the principles of case selection, orientation to the agency and method of proceeding to supervise are all similar to present day practice as outlined, for example, in my own research, and have changed little with the passage of twenty five years.

That British practice lagged behind that of the States is a focus for comment by both Rapaport and Huneaus writing in 1955. The Rapaport article is the first offering on the subject of supervision in the British Journal of Psychiatric Social Work, and it is an excellent one. Calling for a profession which in Charlotte Towle's terms means learning "a body of principles and concepts for differential use" she reminds me forcibly of the similar ideas of the C.O.S. Training Committee in 1898. Yet there is a qualitatively different emphasis. It rests on the integration which has to take place in the learner who has to:

"undergo/...

"undergo considerable change in his thinking, feeling, attitudes, and therefore his behaviour. This is crucial since the professional person has to use himself in giving professional service to others".⁸⁰

In comments about early supervisors as "checking up" and offering an apprenticeship model the author does, I think less than justice to the early educational philosophy in British social work education. It is not the educational emphasis in the strict sense which was altered by these developments, but the introduction of new ideas about the nature of relationship, unconscious process and growth deriving from dynamic psychology. "We now (1954) believe the primary responsibility of the supervisor is to teach" would I think meet a surprised response from Miss Bosanquet.

Yet this article with its emphasis on the dynamic element in the supervisory relationship constitutes a landmark in the British literature. In developing the dynamic nature of the supervisory relationship Rapaport makes links for the British reader with the work of Towle,⁸¹ Reynolds,⁸² and Feldman,⁸³ three of the key American authors on the subject. She postulates that:

"the continuous learning and growth possible under supervision is one of the dynamics of the process that underlies professional development".⁸⁴

Supervision is seen as:

"a disciplined tutorial process wherein principles are/...

"are transferred into practising skills".⁸⁵

It is a method of individualising for the learner the help that he needs to master the content of social work education and provides through the relationship an opportunity for the concept of the professional self to be crystallised "through partial identification with the supervisor". The chief aim is to make learning a conscious process (Feldman), and it is a method which seeks to integrate the emotions and the intellect for social use (Towle). She goes on, again quoting Towle, to make an important point:

"the educational process is to help keep the learner's ego intact so that there will be a minimum of personality disorganisation, so that reorganisation and re-integration may occur gradually and naturally".⁸⁶

In other words it is an individualised learning opportunity bounded by a specific work purpose and a focus on the assumed strengths of the student for success. Achieved through positive identification with the supervisor in relationship the emphasis is on the business of beginning to learn social work and on the more conscious and available aspects of that process. Yet for the first time such ideas include by implication less conscious process and the student's individual needs for help and support which if encouraged inappropriately lead to distortion.

⁸⁷Howarth comments that "learning reawakens childhood needs" and discusses some problems of supervisory anxiety and student/...

student learning, stressing the need to retain an educational focus.

This oddly prophetic phase, reflecting ideas rather practice, may sound rather academic. It is, however, the preface to a period of experimentation which has both a practical and direct flavour. The supremacy of the notion of relationship together with ideas about individualised help and assessment continue to be central to the development of supervisory practice in social work education.

Supervision as Education - The Phase of Experimentation

The period from the mid fifties to the mid sixties was one of expansion and experimentation. The ideas already described percolated through the literature, through Conferences and Seminars, and began to be put into practice here, at first with caution and later with enthusiasm. The literature in the period is diverse and practical, reflecting a series of personal views and experiences, experiments and questions, as British social workers began to develop skills in the new supervision.

In the States the fifties was a time in which, Goldstein writes

"substantial clarity emerged about the many dimensions of professional activity and thought; its structure, its definition of aims and purposes, the nature of its practice, and by implication, its philosophy".⁸⁸

The Hollis-Taylor Report (Social Work Education in the United/...

United States 1951) advocated a generic curriculum of education. The structure of the proposed two year Master's course modified the former apprenticeship style of education. Three aspects of developments are particularly important. Firstly, as graduate schools redesigned their curriculum to meet the new requirements it became possible to think of professional education in more universal terms. A broader educational base supplemented the former narrow concern with technical ability. As a result, agencies in which students were trained were asked to give up the immediate gains involved in students' contributions to the practicalities of daily practice for the long term gains of education for the profession. Secondly, the theories and aims of practice during this time indicated that:

"persons in their social environment were the central concern of social work rather than the method used to treat them" and "individuals, their relationships with one another, and their involvements with society formed an inextricable whole".⁸⁹

Thirdly, this developing understanding underlined the importance and interrelatedness of group and community work within the totality of social work practice, and lent impetus to study and definition in these areas. These ideas and developments, widely available in this phase within the American journals, added to the ferment of developing ideas about practice here.

In/...

In Britain there was a wide development of experimentation with supervision as a means of improving both staff and student learning and practice. Both kinds of supervision are described with little differentiation but it is to student supervision that I plan to direct attention. Issues in the development of staff supervision are dealt with by Snelling⁹⁰, Zucker⁹¹, Austin⁹², Hanson⁹³, Kelly⁹⁴, Paterson⁹⁵ and Moon⁹⁶ in this period, but I do not plan to expand these here. Material on student supervision deals with three main areas of concern namely, the aims and functions of supervision together with some directions on how to do it, the essential differences between learning and therapy, and the problems of course/field integration.

Turning first to the aims and functions of supervision. Shepherd writes:

"Supervision is essentially an educational process. Its aims are to help the student to use in a professionally disciplined manner his natural ability to relate himself sensitively to clients, to begin to understand and use theoretical concepts and principles in the task of trying to help them, and to learn to become aware of the ways in which his own emotional reactions are affecting his work either positively or negatively".⁹⁷

The functions of the supervisor are in brief:

1. To select cases for the student to work with.
2. To help the student appreciate the significance of/...

of information he may collect.

3. To help the student assess situations.
4. To guide, by giving enough freedom.
5. To adjust to the tempo of the student's learning.
6. To recognise when stress arises and to help towards an integrated use of knowledge.

This is a development of the ideas put forward by Rapaport and contains little that is new. Perhaps, however, the final emphasis on the stress of learning and the problems of integration are indications of progress. A description of the bones of the supervisor's activity is given by

Snelling:

"It is as though she adds a second dimension to the worker's first; or as if she were the upright index of a graph with the worker the horizontal, the case movement being plotted by their convergent points The supervisor is free to walk around the case as it were, until she finds the viewpoint that will have the most meaning for this particular worker; then she says in effect 'come and look at your case from over here and tell me what you see'⁹⁸".

The heightened emphasis on the educational nature of the supervisory process raised inevitably the question of the integration of theory and practice once more. Alongside the business of the acceptance of a clear teaching function by the field ran the problems for courses of clarifying their expectations and identifying levels of standard and performance. Three authors stand out in their concern for re-examination of the assumptions underlying social work education. Beck, as early as 1952 declared: /...

declared:

"The assumptions which we take for granted as obvious are the ones which it is most important to question and to verify".

She further added that a choice lay ahead.

"We may prefer to concentrate exclusively on the practice of medical social work and its transmission as a craft on apprenticeship lines: but in that case we cannot hope to touch more than the fringe of the urgent problems of the day. On the other hand, if we are prepared to get down to disciplined study and to consider our problems in their wider settings, we may contribute towards the development of a more humane science and a more effective humanism".⁹⁹

Bartlett, too, emphasised the need for openness and growth to clearer understanding of the educational process and the theme is taken up again in 1959 by Timms. Indicating that

"confidence in this notion of 'theory and practice' is based on concealed problems and unacknowledged confusions"

he raises for discussion the nature of the educational experience in the field and its relevance for present education. Quoting Edith Abbott in 1928:

" 'Our great problem has been, and still is, to make fieldwork truly educational. Its importance is accepted by all of us; but few attempts have been/...

been made to analyse its educational content and the methods of securing educational results'.

This opinion recorded in 1928 accurately describes our present difficulties".¹⁰⁰

Timms usefully, in my view, goes on in subsequent articles to question traditional beliefs about placement length and design, and to call for a differential use of agencies depending on whether experience was required at professional or pre-professional levels.¹⁰¹ His concerns are

shared by Butler¹⁰² and Halmos¹⁰³ as social work educators began to ask more searching questions about the nature and range of experience desired, and the correlation between these expectations and those of the supervisors in the agencies. For a similar questioning of the nature of appropriate educational activity seemed generally absent as a sharp editorial in Case Conference in 1962 indicates:

"If it was really appreciated by the Universities and the supervisors that supervision was a teaching task and needed to be thought about and taught, just as methods of education are taught to teachers in training, then I think there would be more raised eyebrows, rather than approbation for the supervisor who is ready to take on all comers from all courses".¹⁰⁴

Indeed the need "to redesign educational programmes to meet changing patterns and new responsibilities in practice/...

practice" is echoed by Cooper¹⁰⁵ who identified the need, still largely unmet, for the development of advanced programmes and opportunities if theoretical understanding is to be advanced in this country. Here, too, the Younghusband Report¹⁰⁶ gave impetus to the search for greater clarity about function and training.

Central to this debate about the nature of field experience and integration of theory and practice were questions about the educational nature of supervision. How did students learn, and how best was the desired integration achieved? The key contribution in this area is that of Stevenson. In 1962 she wrote

"It is of course ultimately not our task but that of the student to integrate theory and practice. The student must bring together within himself these two different kinds of experience which he is getting. He is not bringing together simply theory and practice: these may represent for him thought and feeling. Our two sides of the question - the university and the social agency - may often symbolise for the student the difficulty of bringing together thought and feeling This is the core of the matter".¹⁰⁷

A subsequent paper¹⁰⁸ attempts a tentative discussion of some educational theory which might be helpful to social work educators. Drawing mainly on the work of Whitehead and Towle she says:

"let/...

"let us keep in mind that all learning is a struggle. We need never imagine that if we were clever enough and the students were stable and intelligent enough, the path would be a smooth one".¹⁰⁹

Discussing the inevitable and healthy tension between those forces which strive for change and those which resist it, she uses Whitehead's three stages, of romance, precision and generalisation - to inform thinking about appropriate educational activity. The six areas of important learning identified are those of Towle.¹¹⁰

1. an orderly way of thinking.
2. knowledge and understanding of human behaviour.
3. knowledge and understanding of working relationships.
4. knowledge and understanding of agency structure and function.
5. knowledge and understanding of the community and how to use its resources.
6. knowledge of history and law and how to use it in the solution of social problems.

Stevenson comments that the crucial area of self-awareness and developing skill in the use of relationship do not appear in Towle's list. This is because she sees them as stemming naturally from the development of knowledge and understanding in the foregoing areas.

In reviewing the role of the supervisor or teacher in the three phases mentioned Stevenson notes that any discussion/...

discussion of teaching method must 'begin and end with a restatement of the basis upon which it all depends: the relationship of the teacher and the taught'¹¹¹. The creation of a relationship of trust within which it is possible to learn.

"Your task, ultimately, is to create the trust in the meaningfulness of the particular world the student has chosen to enter; in your acceptance of him, you offer an experience of acceptance far more convincing than words which he may transfer to his clients; in your concern and compassion for him and for others you help to convince him that he was right to come to social work in hope and that he has found for himself a permanent romance".¹¹²

It is, however, in this idea of the creation of the relationship of trust that social work practice and educational practice come close together, and it is the area in which much confusion and anxiety has been generated. When does education become therapy, and should it? This muddled debate continues to the present day, and is I hope clarified further in my own research.

Shepherd writing in 1957 says of the relationship of trust:

"it is inevitable that the relationship between student and supervisor becomes emphasised. The fact that this is so, and that the student's whole personality becomes engaged in the supervisory experience makes it incumbent upon the supervisor to clarify her ideas as to the difference between supervision/...

"supervision and therapy, and to guard against becoming a therapist to the student".

The maxim seems to be that provided the work between them is directed to those areas of which the student is consciously aware, then all will be well. Howarth raises the same issue:

"a further doubt raised about supervision is that it may be a disguised form of therapy".¹¹⁴

In distinguishing between education and therapy she adds - somewhat judgementally I fear -

"The student is, however, always different from a client. He is preparing to perform an honourable part in a profession, and he brings a strength of purpose and a wealth of experience and achievement to the task".¹¹⁵

Certainly the boundaries are difficult to define, and the matter more complex than simple definition might suggest. The concept of role is helpfully developed by Woodcock,¹¹⁶ but the subtlety of the learning required and the implications for education are described well by Butler.

"This places a responsibility on us to select people who can stand having a look at themselves; and a specific responsibility towards them so that they can grow too quickly and yet know that they are being cared about enough to tolerate such forced growth; because what we are expecting of them is that they shall come to grips with the fundamental/...

"fundamental values and problems of living in a deliberate almost self-conscious way: values and problems which in the ordinary run of life they might not have to face and consider in as many years as the course lasts months¹¹⁷."

A student view of the experience of supervision is apposite and a classic on the subject is one by Barker, written in 1963:

"I was onionlike, protected from self knowledge by a number of skins. These I proceeded (and am still proceeding) to shed. This process comes on at high speed during training, and we are often frightened, though sometimes relieved, to discover what lies beneath the surface of our personalities. We come to know and allow for both our strength and weakness".¹¹⁸

Developments in thinking in this phase are I think well summed up by Hammond in two articles, 'Supervision in Professional Development'¹¹⁹, and 'Patterns of Learning in Fieldwork'.¹²⁰ They bring together in coherent formulation the thinking developed within the period and state it as established fact and method. She does stress the importance of the need to

"grow confident in applying the skills we have learned as caseworkers within the framework of a student/supervisor relationship".¹²¹

and includes clearly and without ambivalence the responsibility to use the student/supervisor relationship as/...

as an integral part of the student's education. Would that this were sufficient to deal with the difficulty!

The ending of one period both enshrines and heralds the next. I greeted Stevenson's article 'Social Work and Training: The Next Phase'¹²² with relief, endorsing wholeheartedly her view that

"a certain sterility has entered into discussions about supervision".¹²³

Her view of the next phase accorded with my own

"The next phase requires a closer analysis of how the supervisor's time is actually spent to see if the gap is between the theory and practice of supervision, or between the reality of social work practice and the teaching offered".¹²⁴

A difficult undertaking, but one which opens up again the matter for scrutiny, and as Timms did earlier, calls into question the practice and dogma of supervision without adequate evaluation and examination.

Supervision as Responsive Environment - The Stage of Establishment

This phase moves on in two main ways. Supervision, established as a normal part of social work education, is further described and conceptualised but with a new emphasis on the organisational and contextual aspects of the process. Secondly, new questions about its validity occur. Taking the period from the mid sixties to the present day, the early seventies are characterised by a greater institutionalisation of the process in the shape of/...

of Government policy about students on the one hand, and by a fresh interest in research on the other.

Social work education in this period has been involved in major change both as a consequence of developing theoretical understanding and of new legislation, the outcome of that developing understanding and of social and political pressure. Goldstein, writing of the sixties in the States, lists trends and events which influenced the development of theory and practice there.

"An eminent one among them was the beginning introduction of a social systems concept in which individuals, groups, and larger systems could be understood in their inter-dependence, a concept which tended to supplement the previous monadic orientation. Another factor, related to the first, was the return of social work to a family orientation based on the conceptual means of understanding the family as a viable system. In other respects the new systems approach made it apparent that one could not conceive of change in any one social unit without reference to the implications for the related units or persons. So the ramifications of practice were now seen to extend beyond the confines of the immediate social worker-client configuration".¹²⁵

Kendall, in a paper delivered to the National Institute for Social Work Training in October 1972, sets out the theoretical/...

theoretical and ideological conflicts in which social work is currently embroiled. Questions of commitment, of values, of ideology, are potent when considered in relation to change activity. Describing the preoccupation with social change throughout the social work schools in the world she writes of the Latin American notion of conscientization.

"This is strong medicine for social work, compounded as it is of humanism, utopianism, Marxism, egalitarianism, Maoism, and single-minded commitment combined with a problem solving approach".¹²⁶

She comments that all schools throughout the world are passing through a period of intense preoccupation with the purpose of social work in society. The difficulty is to identify and hold on to the core of the activity.

"It is axiomatic that social workers regardless of the nature of their professional activity, need to know certain things about man and social institutions, about their own culture and its impact on their values, about the conditions in their own society, about how to approach and deal with certain types of social and human problems. They also need to bring to their work a strong sense of social responsibility based on a commitment to human beings rather than to institutions. This is an outline of the core in all parts of the world".¹²⁷

The dream, she indicates, resides in the thrust toward helping/...

helping people to become aware of their own needs and capable of shaping their own destinies. The nightmare begins when social work action becomes ideologically transformed into political revolution.

Problems of working within or without the system are important in Britain in this phase. The re-organisation of social work departments within the local authorities, the integration of many of the services into a whole, more bureaucratised than previously, the increasing interest in structural change, all combine to raise value and ideological issues here in addition to those of theoretical understanding and practice teaching. Stevenson's ¹²⁸ article, "Knowledge for Social Work", is an important contribution to the debate.

Against this theoretical and ideological ferment what happened in this phase to the process of supervised practice in the field? In some senses the answer is astonishingly little. The literature developed solidly, but with little departure from the ideas already made explicit. Important for understanding the development of the organisation of fieldwork is Brown and Gloyne's study "The Field Training of Social Workers" published in 1966. Within a survey of the broad problems of fieldwork they stress the limitations which prevented

"the combination of this wide survey with a first hand study of the teaching content and methods of supervisors in the field, and the ways in which the progress of students was in fact/...

"fact assessed. Such studies central to field training, will it is hoped, follow this preliminary enquiry".¹²⁹

What did follow were a further series of texts on supervision and it would be invidious to pass on without acknowledging them. They are evidently widely read and regularly quoted, particularly by those who are beginning to supervise. All were written by university tutors, the first and last of whom were American social workers working in Britain. These, in order of publication, are 'Supervision in Social Work' by Dorothy Pettes (1967)¹³⁰, 'The Student and Supervision in Social Work Education' by Priscilla Young (1967)¹³¹, and 'Social Work Supervision in Practice' by Bessie Kent (1969)¹³². Of these the first seems the most comprehensive, and provides an understanding of supervision and its purposes for staff and students on the basis of a definition given by Charlotte Towle of the supervisor as 'teacher, administrator, and helper'.¹³³ The teaching task, the administrative responsibilities, and the ways of helping open to the supervisor are clearly spelled out. The forward by Pauline Hammond welcomes the clarity of the statement of the task, 'supervision is not just sitting next to Nellie'. I think that the assumptions made about supervision, and in particular the relationship between the individual supervisor, the agency and the course, reflect a rather ideal world, but this perhaps is the hazard faced by textbook authors and their readers. The second of these books aims only to provide/...

provide a short introduction to the subject and takes a broadly similar line. Charlotte Towle's definition once again provides the basis of thought, and the book sets out a series of 'do's and don'ts' in relation to preparation for the student, the selection of cases, and the use of case records for teaching. Evaluative techniques are outlined, and running through both books are the by now familiar warnings about 'doing casework' with the students.

Bessie Kent's book, the last of the trio, makes a welcome attempt to demonstrate reality by publishing a record kept by a supervisor of her interaction with a student placed with her in a general hospital. I found the emphasis on teaching irritating as it carried throughout the implication that this was what the student learned, but as a demonstration of current practice it raises interesting questions.

It is in the journals of the period that I think the clearest glimpse of developing thought is evident. Change is in the air. Leonard provides this time some of the questions necessary to and characteristic of change in phase. The tension between "emotional investment and scientific objectivity" engages his attention in the consideration of scientific method in social work education.¹³⁴ Later, writing on social change, he says

"the new look in social work is about wider objectives, wider social change as well as microscopic/...

"microscopic change".¹³⁵

Cheetham, in an excellent article on social work education and the new Departments of Social Work,¹³⁶ takes the issue about wider objectives further with practical clarity.

She develops ideas about roles in fieldwork as

1. Being responsible for the care and support of individuals and families.
2. Being in a position of authority.
3. Giving and withholding of resources.
4. The political and negotiating role.
5. Teaching and public relations.
6. Co-operative and co-ordinating role.

In outlining the dilemma of equipping the multi-methods worker she nevertheless points the way to a wide consideration of the implications of statements such as Leonard's. In a curious way too, the hub of the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968, Section 12, in laying upon local authorities the responsibility to promote the social welfare of the community, both confirms and enlarges the concept of social work as a broader more preventive change activity.

Organisational issues were a general concern in social work in this period. They were too a focus for some concern in the educational area. Tensions between courses and fieldwork agencies are an inevitable part of working together, but the difficulties are more often seen in the literature in personal tutor/supervisor terms and in rather idealistic statements about joint planning. Two/...

Two articles are important as they stand more or less alone in their willingness at least to examine "the partnership". Both stress the problem of the accountability of the supervisor, and the tension which exists between course and agency - seen by Daniel as

"inherent and I think desirable"¹³⁷

Shaw is a little less sanguine.

"The cost in terms of 'wear and tear' is incalculable"¹³⁸

The idea of partnership as central to the social work education enterprise is further idealised by the British Association of Social Workers Policy Statement on Basic Professional Education for Social Work.

"Educational institutions and fieldwork agencies are vital partners in providing professional education".

The paper does give some indication that life may not be as easy as all that.

"Such a partnership can only come into being through a vigorous and genuine sharing of ideas and responsibility various ways of promoting the feeling and reality of partnership will be found by the groups involved in social work education".¹³⁹

Indeed?

The period saw a continuing emphasis on the organisational issues in staff supervision. Papers of interest are those by Crichton¹⁴⁰, Brignell¹⁴¹, Copleston¹⁴², Boston et al.¹⁴³, Parsloe¹⁴⁴, Zach¹⁴⁵ and Burton and Bradstow¹⁴⁶.

An/...

An article by Spencer¹⁴⁷ on support for workers within the new departments gives an indication that the development of staff supervision in the service generally is an area that demands further and urgent attention if standards of work are to be maintained, let alone developed.

Student supervision develops more clearly in this phase a concern with the responsive environment.¹⁴⁸ In this the supervisor plays a key part, but a part, and there is increasing emphasis on the role of the agency, other staff and peers in learning. Parsloe, differentiating between staff and student supervision, says

"the professional development of the medical social worker is, I think, a side product, but not the aim of the process, whereas with student supervision the aims are reversed and the professional development of the student is the primary aim of supervision".¹⁴⁹

She further comments that

"we choose to help our students to learn, and place our emphasis upon helping them to do so, rather than upon the content of what we aim to teach them".¹⁴⁹

This emphasis on professional development and on helping students to learn, is developed further in articles by Mattinson¹⁵⁰ and by Lewis¹⁵¹. Lewis enlarges on student support as enabling in the learning situation. She describes how group discussion facilitated the solving of common problems, informal discussion (without the supervisor) relieved many personal anxieties which otherwise/...

otherwise blocked learning, and knowledge and ideas about all aspects of child care were enriched by the formal and informal interchange of student experiences. Parsloe similarly describes the experience of students in a prison situation and illumines the way in which the student group learned from each other, from staff and inmates, and derived considerable support in

"what must, if it is successful learning,

be a disturbing experience" ¹⁵²

In the background the education/therapy debate trundled on with somewhat repetitive monotony. It is important for the feeling which is associated with it, but extraordinarily unchanged in concept. Houwick enlarges

"The worker in training is encouraged to face himself honestly and to gain an awareness of his own feelings as clients touch upon them.

This is not an analysis of the aetiology of these feelings as would be appropriate in therapy; it is rather an identification of his feelings per se and their possible interference with his work with his clients. In a healthy personality an awareness of one's own feelings is apt to be sufficient to gain a perspective on them and to handle them so that they will not interfere with others". ¹⁵³

Although the anxiety about education and therapy runs like a thread through much of what is written there is, I think, in the literature here a more directly practical approach./...

approach. For example, the report of a workshop on supervision written in 1965 stresses normal practice

"social work education in general and fieldwork teaching in particular, is a process of shared learning, and what distinguishes fieldwork from other kinds of education is the degree of participation by the students, and the degree of individualisation by the supervisor".¹⁵⁴

Mentioning the stress of the student role and the specific tasks of training they add

"They will learn most fruitfully through a warm relationship with a supervisor who enjoys people and likes a shared learning experience: someone who has the ability to provide an appropriate role model and yet leaves the student free to develop his own individual way of working".

A position not dissimilar from that of Bertha Reynolds in 1942.

Contributing interestingly to the already extensive material is an article in Case Conference, "The Nature of Professional Education"¹⁵⁵ which restates the position differentiating professional education from either academic or technical education. Here Vanden Berg likens social work education to a life crisis of the environmental variety.

"And like all crises, although potentially growth producing is also pain producing, this pain varying from mild discomfort to an intense emotional experience/...

"experience depending on how much disorganisation or unlearning has to take place within a particular individual before the desiredre-integration can occur. Some form of anxiety will thus be inherent in an educational process which demands some measure of personality change".

The emphasis then is on the essential task of the teacher in providing his students with "the maximum psychological safety" neededin order to learn. Barker, in an interesting contribution on education for social work, endorses the importance of

"a structured, holding, caring environment for students" ¹⁵⁶

thus linking the idea of safety in learning not only with the supervisor but with the total context. It is this shift in emphasis which I think is characteristic of this phase.

The phrase "fieldwork teacher" first rears its head in an article by Wilson.¹⁵⁷ In it the educational emphasis is squarely accepted and the task of the fieldwork teacher to

"translate the language of practice into the language of teaching and learning".¹⁵⁸

She adds that if

"the basic aim of education is change in the student, then we can look upon the basic aim of social work education in terms of change in attitudes, growth in knowledge and development of/...

¹⁵⁹
"of skills".

However the method by which these aims are to be achieved adds little to the present understanding, it rests on a quotation similar to many already given by Snelling in 1955. Perhaps more helpful in this connection is work by Cohn ¹⁶⁰ who draws on concepts from educational psychology to illumine further the method of supervisory teaching. These concepts certainly I think convey a clear commitment to learning as change:

1. The learner must be faced with learning material.
2. Motivation to learn will be gradually reduced when no use can be made of newly learned material.
3. The learning process will be intensified when there are rewards for learning and penalties for not learning.
4. New material will be more easily learned and better retained when perception of it provides an emotional experience.
5. Learning is an ongoing process of induction and deduction. ¹⁶¹

The development of the more formal idea of fieldwork teaching is touched upon in a number of articles seeking new patterns of placement, new contexts for practice, and stronger links between fieldteacher and course.

¹⁶² Millard, ¹⁶³ Shapiro, ¹⁶⁴ Bryant, ¹⁶⁵ Davies, ¹⁶⁶ Ainsworth and ¹⁶⁶ Bridgford have written of separate projects and settings. In all the concept of the total responsive environment emerges as the opportunities available in situations begin to be more/...

more adequately conceptualised by committed educators in the field, and as the tenor of social work itself promotes increasing emphasis on interrelationships and context.

This concept of professional education is developed in searching ways in a wide series of articles in the American "Journal of Education for Social Work", first published in 1965. The initial emphasis is on the integration of practice and education with a healthy regard for the organisational elements. Particularly helpful are Mark Hale's two articles 'Agency - School Planning'¹⁶⁷ and 'The Focus and Scope of a School of Social Work'.¹⁶⁸ Margaret Schubert as ever makes a thought provoking contribution on Curriculum Policy Dilemmas in Field Instruction.¹⁶⁹ The title of this article gives the clue to the tenor of thought, namely the nature of the conceptual teaching to be given in the field. Finestone, in 'Selected Features of Professional Field Instruction',¹⁷⁰ draws attention to the necessity for a move away from apprentice type teaching to a range of content that reflects the total social work curriculum (my emphasis); to a preparation for changes in knowledge basis, in organisation of services, and in methods of practice; and makes provision not only for reflection of the class curriculum but also for feedback and impact on that curriculum. For an American article this one is particularly frank about the difficulties which impede such a shift in emphasis but the hope is that where the will exists ways will be found.

More/...

More practical but in the same vein is a fascinating account of work at Tulane on the planned teaching of Human Growth and Behaviour in association with the field. The standards achieved in respect of the mutual knowledge of theory and practice are impressive.¹⁷¹

The preparation of faculty for their posts and the necessity for the provision of two-way opportunities for learning is a further welcome theme. Particularly helpful is an article on Behavioural Science Institutes, an account of workshops planned to promote exchange of thinking and mutual work on Human Growth and Behaviour between course and field.¹⁷² Indeed alongside a preoccupation with total curriculum reform, research and values in social work, run a thread of excellent articles relating theory to practice in the widest possible sense in the field situation. There is evidence of wider, more imaginative thinking than we have yet achieved here particularly in the selective use of time, in the more sophisticated use of teaching methods in the field, and in the range and scope of the agencies used. The project described in "Field Instruction at Marywood"¹⁷³ is a good example.

Little further progress in understanding the nature and functions of supervision is contained in the British journals of the early '70s. Rather it is questions which begin again to raise their heads. Questions posed by both students and fieldteachers with equal abrasiveness. However the debate about the nature of supervision as an educational/...

educational enterprise may have been settled to the satisfaction of the educators the same would not appear to be true of the recipients. Less grateful for initiation than former students apparently were, those who wrote that is, or perhaps were published, beginning questions are expressed by Sawdy.

"By far the biggest complaint (among students considering forming a social work student association) was the common experience of being 'caseworked' in the name of training tutors tended to fall back on casework techniques when faced with negative response of any kind. Students thus felt that expressions of dissatisfaction were de-fused and invalidated by being personalised".

They added that they were

"dissatisfied with the narrow interpersonal relationships perspective".¹⁷⁴

Nor in a more general sense were they alone. Take for example Geoffrey Rankin's "Personal View" subtitled "Supervision and Assessment: science - art - therapy - or mumbo jumbo"¹⁷⁵. He writes, with I suspect ample cause, that in his view there has been little change in the expectations of him as supervisor in ten years. He finds the value judgements he is forced to make about students considered as 'objective statements', the course concerned having little awareness of his personal idiosyncrasies and deviations from established norms. He questions the 'pretentious nonsense' involved in much evaluation, dismisses/...

dismisses therapy in supervision as unethical, and questions the rituals involved.

The responses by Wilson¹⁷⁶ and Baker¹⁷⁷ I found a trifle righteous in tone, perhaps the gratitude expressed for the questions raised by Rankin does not ring quite true. What does have an urgent, if angry, ring of truth is the comment of an Oxford social work student writing in the same issue. Deploing the confusion in social work itself and the wide range of expectations of students on courses he goes on

"The central part of training clearly lies in a practising and exploration of the crafts themselves. Both Popplestone and Wilson are concerned about standards of fieldwork supervision and the need for a supportive, democratic sharing of assessment. Unfortunately, however, this is frequently an empty and unrealised ideal. Poor supervision, little support and manipulative or autocratic demands are sometimes made by an agency so short-staffed that it can provide no useful, educative role. Some attempt must be made to establish minimum, national standards, which are agreed upon before a student is placed in an agency".¹⁷⁸

In other words we may well revert to Stevenson's question raised at the end of the previous phase - the need for examination of the supervisor's use of time, of the gap between theory and practice or between reality and teaching. The urgent need is for examination of current practice and/...

and teaching, to understand what is and where practice stands in relation to the foregoing expressions of experience and belief of which the literature is largely made up.

Research - The Missing Element

If the literature on supervision is abundant then that on research into the subject is so sparse as to be virtually absent. It seems strange that there should be so little. Yet perhaps it is not so surprising when viewed in the context of educational research in this country and the methodological complexities involved. A number of authors have called for research into supervision. Heap quotes, Fine, Stiles, Austin and Feldman in particular in the American context.¹⁷⁹ Stevenson's call for examination of the process is perhaps the British equivalent.

The material in this connection is largely American. There are two key published studies of which Field Instruction in Social Casework by Schubert¹⁸⁰ published in 1963 is the first. This is an experimental study which assigned students from the University of Chicago School of Social Service Administration randomly to experimental and non-experimental fieldwork units to assess at the beginning and at the end of the first graduate year certain attributes of the student considered relevant to professional development. It was hoped to evaluate student performance during the first and second years, and thus to arrive at some understanding of the learning experiences that are closely associated with positive movement./...

movement. The findings suggested that the use of the experimental design with its emphasis on initial observation was a valuable way of beginning to teach case work, and that random assignment of students to placements was not detrimental. No light, if there is any, was thrown on the association between quality of fieldwork instruction and the learning that takes place. Further research in this area is recommended.

The second study, Individual and Group Supervision in Field Instruction, by Esther Sales with Elizabeth Navarre, was published in 1970¹⁸¹, and is a study of the comparative effectiveness and timesaving associated with group as compared with individual supervision. The authors found that considerable time saving with little difference in eventual student performance is achieved by group supervision, the main difference being that those students supervised in groups preferred work with groups of clients, whereas those individually supervised preferred one to one situations. Both these studies are experimental in construction, and base their findings on criteria designed to evaluate student performance at the beginning and at subsequent stages in training by the application of tests, questionnaires and the measurement of results. They do not explore the task of the fieldwork teacher nor attempt to illumine the choices which have to be made in terms of individual student need. Margaret Schubert states explicitly that for the purposes of her study differences between instructors are necessarily ignored. She/...

She writes, 'the field instructor himself constitutes an important part of the educational climate', but efforts to achieve an agreed ranking of competence proved impossible and 'this aspect of the student's educational opportunity remains ambiguous'.¹⁸²

A number of other short studies are reported in the journals. The process has not been the subject of extensive research and in recent work both Nelson¹⁸³ and Kadushin¹⁸⁴ comment on this fact. Bruck¹⁸⁵ in 1963 conducted a study of student learning patterns in fieldwork training. This is a small study (18 students within the one school) which lays emphasis on the relationship between certain aspects of personality and performance in fieldwork towards the end of the first year of training. Berengarten¹⁸⁶, in a study of sixteen students, focused on factors particularly associated with student selective response to learning demands, and the use of supervision in learning with particular reference to the handling of anxiety and the stimuli associated with positive learning response. He developed a typology of learning patterns

1. The experiential-emphatic learner.
2. The doer.
3. The intellectual-empathic learner.

Heap suggests that studies by Zanger and Lide usefully illumine further aspects of the empathic component in professional learning and functioning.¹⁸⁷

Studies which focus on the relationship between supervisor and student are in short supply but recent work/...

work evidences a greater interest in this important area. Rose¹⁸⁸ in 1965 reports a study of 143 students which focuses on the content and timing of their criticism of their supervision. The timing of criticism was found to be a function of the phase of learning in which the student is involved, a view similar to my own. Nelson¹⁸⁹, in a two part summary of work on the teaching content of early fieldwork conferences, studied tapes of conferences held between a sample of eleven field instructors and nineteen case work students assigned to them. She found that the field instructors favoured a particularly active teaching style, that they offered support which was used more extensively and flexibly than might have been expected, providing emotional reassurance and cognitive reinforcement for learning. There are comments on the experience of feeling following sanction by the instructor, and on the extent of time spent discussing agency content and community resources in hospital settings. The second part of the study is an interesting application of communication theory to the interaction, which stresses the importance of role stance in terms of relationship communications. These may be of complementary (one up or one down) or of a symmetrical (essentially peer group) kind, and relationship strain was significantly associated with incongruence when the nature of the disagreement was that the field instructor's stance was more complementary than the student's, and the student's stance was more symmetrical than the instructor's. Smooth relationships were/...

were likely for pairs who were matched in role stance at the outset. Knowledge of role preferences at the outset could have produced a more smooth relationship.

Another article also published this year is by Kadushin, Supervisor - Supervisee: A Survey.¹⁹⁰ Likewise noting that "no significant studies of (social work) supervision have appeared" in the five year period between 1965 and 1970, he reports a questionnaire study of a nationwide sample of supervisors and supervisees. This relates to staff supervision but emphasises again the sources of satisfaction in supervision, the discrepancies between the two views of functions and objectives, and returns to some of the classical dilemmas. Classical dilemmas are the problems associated with evaluation, the nature of the conflict between administrative evaluatory responsibilities and educational-consultative responsibilities of supervision and the legitimacy of concern with, and responsibility for, the personal problems of supervisees. Here this seemed resolved - supervision is seen as helping the supervisee to become a better worker rather than a better person. Both groups selected "insuring the more complete development of the supervisee as a mature person" as among the three least important objectives. Although relationship skills have been emphasised as a key factor in supervision, in this study technical competence was a consideration of equal, of not greater, importance.

Heap notes four further studies of which I have traced one. De Marche and Iskander¹⁹¹ in 1950 studied the influence/...

influence of supervisor's direct observations upon both the supervisee's performance and the client's experience of social work help. Otto and Griffiths¹⁹² experimented to achieve with supervisees increased contact with their own strengths and their associated ability to recognise and stimulate clients' resources. Cohen¹⁹³ describes an experiment in self-supervision, and the "Chapter Study" (edited Cruser 1958¹⁹⁴) surveyed the opinions of 100 social workers about aspects of supervisory process.

British studies are few and far between. 'The First Two Years' by Moon and Slack¹⁹⁵, a study of the beginning work experience of a cohort of almoners within the hospital service, points to the need for a further study of training issues. Three articles, written in the mid sixties, give an indication of interest in supervision. The first, 'A Time Study of Supervision', by Noel Timms¹⁹⁶ looks at the time spent in a variety of activities by fifteen supervisors concerned with eleven professional and seven pre-professional students. He comments on the time consuming nature of individual supervision, raises questions as to the effective use of time, and stresses the demands made by pre-professional students in this regard. The second is 'A Study of Beginning Supervisors' by G.D.C. Woodcock¹⁹⁷. In this article he interprets the responses to a questionnaire study of forty new supervisors in the light of a career crisis which he likens to professional parenthood. The third/...

third, by Herand called 'Students in Institutions - A Survey'¹⁹⁸ - is a questionnaire survey of the supervisory experience of 55 Child Care Students. It is particularly interesting in the light of my own work, and traces factors associated with 'good' and 'bad' experiences of supervision in a first residential placement. 'Bad' experiences were significantly associated with lack of preliminary discussion with the tutor, a feeling of being unwelcome at arrival at the placement, and an awareness that relationships between the College and agency were poor. In all cases too the relationship with the supervisor was felt to be bad. The author concludes 'This relationship therefore seems of key importance in the success or otherwise of the placement'.

Two British reports are noteworthy as they reflect increased interest in this field. These are the Report of the Working Party on Fieldwork, published by the Council of Training in Social Work in 1971,¹⁹⁹ and the Report on Fieldwork, published in 1972 by the Advisory Council on Child Care.²⁰⁰ The first of these makes a wide number of recommendations regarding the need for research, for greater clarity about aims and methods in training, and for consideration of the educational needs of fieldwork teachers. In particular it draws attention to three issues: the need to articulate clearly in relation to the theory and method of education the theory and method of fieldwork teaching as it has been developed over the years, the possibility of increasing the range of fieldwork experience, and the need to take into account the small but/...

but increasing amount of research into the effectiveness of social work intervention. The Working Party's attempts to find out about the current fieldwork situation met with mixed response. For example, out of forty six questionnaires, sent to all colleges responsible for social work courses together with a selection of university courses, only twenty eight replies were received, revealing no agreement about the qualities considered essential for competent performance as a social worker. An attempt to find out about material in use in teaching, such as books, articles, unpublished papers or research projects, resulted in a questionnaire being sent to twenty two colleges and six universities. Only five colleges replied, giving lists of published books and articles only, a real poverty of response.

The second report mentioned is more encouraging as it reports a range of small experiments in increasing the range of fieldwork and in finding new ways of supervising. It consists of reports by tutors, fieldwork teachers, and students of their experience, and provides ideas and food for thought.

This then is the extent of the presently available research on supervision. Most encouraging perhaps is the rising interest in the area. For example, the preceding articles by Nelson and Kadushin arose from work in the early '70s, and, in addition to this study, there are two more British projects at the writing up stage. Kathleen Curnock, for the Council for Education and Training/...

Training in Social Work,²⁰¹ is completing a questionnaire survey of student units in the U.K., and Merriel Boselli, at Enfield Polytechnic has been pioneering a participant observation study focusing on evaluation. There is much work yet to be done, not least in relating these studies to wider issues in education and educational research, an area to which I plan to return later.

A final question might be about the nature of the gaps in knowledge and the kind of research which may be helpful in increasing understanding of the processes of social work education. Practically speaking little is known of the way time is spent by field teachers and students in agencies, about the choices made, and the assumptions which operate. The tendency in studies of fieldwork to separate off the experience from the associated course goes contrary to my perceptions of how students describe their learning. Problems of integration and linkage still perplex educators and research which ignores this complexity is dangerously simple. What to me are missing are the kind of broad exploratory studies which map the territory, seek to understand interrelationships in all their complexity, and do not split up the educational experience. My own research, taking very full account of both student and staff perspectives, is an attempt to fill this gap.

To summarise. This chapter describes the development of ideas about supervision in Britain through four main phases. The particular emphasis in each phase is clarified and the general development in thinking noted. Gaps which require special attention are the absence in the British literature of material on group supervision as such, and research.

CHAPTER III

Chapter III - Research : Philosophy and Strategy

"I was brought up to believe that ideas were potent in as much as they were logical, sharply defined. I now realise that this is not a self-evident truth, but is in itself an attitude or point of view. And experience of academic life points, if in any direction, in the opposite one: to the view that, at least among men who believe they are rational, ideas are more powerful the vaguer they become; and that their power inheres, in some curious way, in their very inexplicitness. Chief among these nebulous notions is that of being either 'soft' or 'hard'.¹"

Traditionally the emphasis in social work research has been 'hard', perhaps as an academic reaction to much of social work practice where the worker frequently proceeds from day to day on the basis of very soft data indeed. That our verbal commitment to scientific method is at least as old as professional social work education is commented upon by Maas when he quotes E.J. Urwick, speaking in 1903, at the opening of the School of Sociology. He 'emphasised the importance of the scientific method, and a knowledge of principles and law'.² What, Maas asks, has social work learned from direct scientific enquiry into its policies, programmes and practices? 'Primarily it has learned a host of unanticipated and undesirable consequences that have been interpreted essentially as failure for its enterprises'.³ 'Interpreted essentially as/...

as failure' are important words here, and it is to this question of the relationship of method to understanding or meaning that I wish to turn. For the scientific stance and an overpreoccupation with the significance of 'hard' data must influence our perception of the social world we seek to understand. I have earlier commented on the pressure which this notion of scientific respectability exerts, and a typical attitude is expressed by Shyne 'When hypotheses are tested through formal research design, with vigorous consideration of sampling, reliability of data and statistical significance of findings, the research contributes to the body of social work practice theory'⁴ Puckett makes the point that many social work researchers approach a problem well-stocked with knowledge of research design and measurement techniques, 'yet seem oblivious to the consequences such techniques may have on the object of their inquiry and in fact seem unaware of the highly questionable congruence between the "data" generated by such methods and the social world that is claimed to be "measured"'⁵ Nor is he alone in his concern; Hudson⁶, Maas⁷, Maslow⁸ and Bruner⁹, have all expressed a similar anxiety and draw attention to the need for closer examination of the assumptions made about the nature of the social world and the use of methodological strategy.

Puckett quotes the philosopher Alfred Schutz, who as a basic premise argued that man subjectively interprets the meaning of objects and events in everyday life. He makes his point well, and I certainly cannot improve upon it. Men's actions toward objects in the environment are dictated/...

dictated by the meanings attached to these objects. These background expectancies and definitions may be regarded as common sense rationalisations, a system of definitions and concepts employed by men in daily life, albeit frequently on a tacit level, to "make sense" out of the social world.¹⁰

In practice the social world is a complex place, and to understand it researchers must be concerned with the ways in which men interpret and make sense out of their everyday lives. It is often very difficult to be sure what one is measuring, yet measurement has little validity if this is uncertain. It is unreal to reduce people to mere objects, yet to find a research method which "takes appropriate account of objectively ascertainable fact and of the contents of men's minds is a search indeed. The psychological, social and cultural interchange. People, as Hudson reminds us, do not merely interact, bumping into one another like billiard balls; they perceive and form expectations of one another and cling for life and sanity to the confirmation that their immediate neighbours provide. As Erving Goffman has it, there is 'no agent like another person in bringing a world for oneself alive, or by a glance, a gesture, or a remark, shrivelling up the reality in which one is lodged'.¹¹"

These dilemmas about the nature of research, the relevance of the scientific paradigm, the relationship of the research problem to the method chosen, and the search for meaning in the real world were central to my own learning/...

learning about research. The issues are humourously yet brilliantly illuminated in Hudson's "The Cult of the Fact". Rereading it after the passage of two years I am struck by the success of his indoctrination, in the sense that the sensitivity I developed to this dialogue and the values and thinking I absorbed about research process are essentially those which he promotes. But research too is a question of personality and inclination, and where there is a blend of ethos and inclination perhaps it is as well to be wary. Certainly too as students we created our own blend of respected authorities - Schutz, Garfinkel, Cicourel, Goffman, Becker, Laing, Glazer and Strauss to name but the more frequently quoted. Nevertheless I retain a tension in this matter, and recognise the need for the "synthesising stride" of which Hudson speaks. In the end what matters, as he says himself, is not so much the teacher's motive, nor even his style, but the elbow-room he allows.¹² And perhaps the elbow-room which we allow each other?

For it is certainly a strange power that the hard/soft notion exercises. And strange that a social work profession whose practice is so akin to field studies, action research and case methods of inquiry should have eschewed those methods which would make such ready use of related and developed skills. There is a growing body of literature on participant observation and other forms of qualitative research but with few exceptions social work has stuck to a narrower view of what is evidently legitimate research activity. It might also be that/...

that research conceived in ways more relevant to the understanding of social work problems could add more directly to the developing knowledge base of the profession.

However, educational research had begun to grapple with the same problems. The whole business of programme evaluation had historically been dominated by approaches conventional within the experimental and psychometric traditions. Yet there was a similar unease - classrooms just did not lend themselves to easy measurement and the relevance of experimental studies of the "before and after" variety were found to take little cognisance of the real problems encountered by teachers or pupils. Anyone who doubts that the problems here have a large measure of similarity to those of social work, or to medicine, law, architecture or veterinary medicine for that matter, might do well to read "Teachers and Teaching" by Morrison and McIntyre.¹³ This short but pertinent book highlights the astonishingly little attention which is paid in the area of educational research to the behavioural skills of the teachers themselves, to their relationships both with individuals and with classes, to their ability to motivate their pupils, and to their overall management of classroom activity. Yet I suspect that the unease within education is not only the product of dissatisfaction with the scientific paradigm within the frame which it has so far been discussed, but is related too to that growing body/...

body of literature in education which casts doubt on the integrity of the enterprise, seeing schools as places which have "the power to cause (children) mental and physical pain, to threaten, frighten and intimidate them, and to destroy their future lives".¹⁴ This plea for a reappraisal of education with which I find myself much in sympathy finds its most extreme protagonists currently I suppose in the writings of John Holt¹⁵, Paul Goodman¹⁶ and Ivan Illich.¹⁷ Yet it links too with the work of A.S. Neill¹⁸ and the developing concern of Bruner¹⁹ with the relationship between poverty and educational process; and in another dimension, that of the importance of fantasy and imagination in learning, with Richard Jones²⁰ interesting critique of Bruner's *Towards a Theory of Instruction*.²¹ There is much in all of this, and in the classroom studies I have heard so frequently discussed in research seminars that draws one back to review those central gaps identified by Morrison and McIntyre, and highlights the need for greater understanding of interactive processes in education.

Within professional education there are two studies which are particularly helpful in that both utilize a participant observation stance and focus primarily on the student's management of the educational experience. The first of these, Becker's, *Boys in White*,²² a study of medical students in training, demonstrates the perspectives which the group adopted as they progressed through school, and/...

and the ways in which these affected group norms and tasks. The second, Oleson and Whittaker's, 'The Silent Dialogue'²³, I have referred to earlier. While the studies have much in common they have methodologically one important difference in respect of the basis upon which data was collected. While Becker and his associates moved widely withⁱⁿ the school observing and talking, they attempted to establish the existence of the perspectives they identified in a mathematical fashion, by deduction and the inference that if so many comments of a certain kind were heard in a given period, within a given number of interactions, then there was a statistical likelihood of the perspective being held throughout the group. Oleson and Whittaker fare differently. They take the step of lodging the data squarely within the relationship or context in which it was obtained and make their claim for legitimation on that basis, taking as full note of their own part in the interaction as possible and seeing this as integral to the study. It is a position very close to that of social work practice and one which I found congenial.

This line of thought too relates directly to the thinking about research strategy which had been engaging me. I want to talk for a moment about 'illuminative evaluation', a paradigm for educational research into innovatory programmes, but applicable too to established educational ventures. It presents as an alternative to conventional evaluation of the 'before and after' variety - rather/...

rather rudely described as a paradigm for plants and not for people. 'Students - rather like plant crops - are given pre-tests (the seedlings are weighed or measured) and then submitted to different experiences (treatment conditions). Subsequently, after a period of time, their attainment (growth or yield) is measured to indicate the relative efficiency of the methods (fertilizers) used.²⁴ This leads to studies that are artificial and restricted in scope, and usually inadequate for illuminating the complexities of the problem.

The alternative, 'illuminative evaluation' rests within a 'social anthropology' paradigm. It has a fundamentally different research style and methodology, indeed it is in effect a strategy employing a variety of methods. Measurement is abandoned in favour of intensive study of the programme as a whole and the innovation is not studied in isolation but in the context of the 'learning milieu'. Two concepts are significant, the 'instructional system' and the 'learning milieu'. By the instructional system is meant the abstract programme or catalogue description of a course, for example Bruner's *Man : A Course of Study*.²⁵ The assumption is furthermore that this will, with the best intention in the world, undergo modifications of varying sorts in varying classrooms. In crossing from consideration of it as an abstract form to describing details of its implementation is to cross, Parlett suggests, into another realm. Here the second important concept is introduced, that of the 'learning milieu' /...

milieu'. This is the social-psychological and material environment in which students and teachers work together. It depends in any particular classroom on an interplay of numerous different factors; for example, administrative, architectural, curriculum, staff teaching style and student perspectives to name but a few. A study of any programme cannot be separated from the milieu which forms its context. It is central to any analysis of the inter-dependence of teaching and learning, for students' intellectual development cannot be understood in isolation, indeed students do not respond only to presented content but, as both Hudson and Parlett have pointed out, they adapt to and work with the 'learning milieu' taken as an inter-related whole. For both too carry an acute awareness of the impact of the 'hidden' curriculum, and of the power of ideas which are implicit rather than explicit within any situation. It is, for example, possible to reject the explicit!

There are then within this model three main stages. The choice of research tactics rests on individual decisions in each case as to the best available techniques. It is the problem which defines the methods used, not the other way round. One method is not used in isolation but a variety of perspectives are utilized to cross check understandings, and throw light on the common problem.

The first phase is concerned with the researcher getting to know thoroughly 'the day-to-day reality' of the setting being studied. No attempts are made to manipulate/...

manipulate data or eliminate complexity, the scene is studied as it presents. The chief task is to unravel it, and as Parlett says to isolate its significant features, delineate cycles of cause and effect, and comprehend relationships between beliefs and practice, and between organisational patterns and the response of individuals.²⁶

Observation, discussion, formal and informal interviewing, being 'around', together with study of any written background material, curricula, reports etc. may all form part of the work in this initial stage.

The second phase is a development of the first. The aim is to 'focus down' on those issues identified as central to the situation during the beginning stage. This is possible because a knowledgeable feel of the situation has been achieved. Again the choice of where to focus more directly, with whom and when, is eclectic and directed more by understanding of what is necessary than with concern about issues such as sample size etc.

The third stage is concerned primarily with explanation. In it the alternative interpretations are explored and examined, the general principles underlying the programme identified and the study placed in the context of that broader explanation. Obviously in practice these stages overlap - this will be a familiar problem to those preoccupied by casework theory - and interrelate with each other. In many ways it is a pattern similar to that which social workers use in practice. It does mean that the progress of a study cannot be charted in advance, for/...

for it is in the initial utilization of a wide data base and the provision for a progressive narrowing of focus that unpredicted events and phenomena may be given due weight. It represents in my view a welcome attempt to relate educational research to the every day world, the real world of which so much has been said.

Observation, interviews, test data, questionnaires and documentary or background material are all grist for the mill of illuminative evaluation. The method requires too a high degree of skill in interpersonal relations if entry into situations is to be negotiated and the confidence of different groups gained and kept. The purpose needs to be clear and the researcher open about his aims if the integrity and viability of the research position is to be retained. It can be argued that such a method is open to gross bias on the part of the researcher, and while this may be true, it is not necessarily so. Much will depend on the precautions taken, on the self-awareness of the researcher, and on the way evidence is presented so that those who read may understand the basis on which it was collected and judge its quality for themselves. Parlett says that the use of interpretive human insight and skills is encouraged rather than discouraged within this paradigm. I think this is true, but again for me a balance must be struck between the objectively ascertainable and the perceptive interpretation. Both have their part to play in any attempt to 'unravel' reality.

I/...

I have spent time spelling out the details of this research strategy because it is the one within which my own study most naturally falls, and it is these ideas which have to a significant extent influenced my design and thinking. I wanted to confront the social reality of social work education, to examine its processes and inter-relationships with particular reference to the place of fieldwork within the whole. To do this I would need to gain access to a 'whole' which was willing to share its process with me, for I felt I needed to understand much more about the 'day to day' functioning of a course and the ongoing preoccupations of its members, and at a range of levels. Certainly I had had experience of relating to courses as a fieldwork teacher but my assumptions about education, and social work education in particular, had already received a fair rattling, and I thought it important to attempt to look again, to search out the reality, and to begin in that area which was in any case mainly unfamiliar, the academic end of the spectrum. I had therefore in the first background part of the study unexpectedly blank feelings about what to expect; indeed it felt frightening because I could not be precise about what in time I might come to see as important, I could only delineate the areas of a course which I thought would have particular relevance, for example, certain classes and meetings, but whether this was so or not I did not know. For the second part, the study in more depth of the teaching activities of fieldwork teachers, I had more certainty, as the work already described had/...

had led to certain tentative conclusions. Not being in the testing business, and indeed failing to see how I could measure the semantic wilderness in which I found myself, it seemed (as in Stage 2 of the illuminative evaluation paradigm) that it would be interesting to see to what extent interviews with a wider group of related supervisors would generate similar or different conclusions about the nature of the supervisory experience.

The problem then was the choice of course. There were a number of factors already influencing this and it is as well to be explicit about them. I wanted to study the situation in Scotland where the development of thinking about services, the legislation and practice preoccupations were familiar, and I thought a one year concurrent University course would both utilize my own previous knowledge and provide a time boundary for the venture. I also needed a large one year course, if possible, to provide a reasonable sample of fieldwork teachers; and preferably an established group of those involved in supervision because I had already experienced something of the anxiety and uncertainty which exploration in this area at that time produced. In the numbers league, Edinburgh headed the list with 50, Glasgow coming second with 42²⁷ and the other courses being substantially smaller. In the practice stakes the winner was also Edinburgh, the services in the area having been more consistently developed and there being a sizeable group of established supervisors. Time was also at a premium as I had a grant for two years, one was just up and the/...

the necessity of utilizing the forthcoming academic session if I could ^{was} vital. Finally there was the crucial debate - I could probably 'get in' at Edinburgh where I was known and trusted at a level that would be much less immediately possible elsewhere but would I then be accused of such gross bias that the study would be meaningless? In the event I decided to attempt to deal with questions of bias by explication where possible and to approach the Edinburgh Course, a decision of which others must be the judge. The course was sympathetic if ambivalent initially, and it was agreed that provided staff, fieldwork teachers and students were prepared to accept the proposals I could go ahead.

I have already referred to the appended proposals which were then sent to staff and fieldwork teachers. They were in agreement following discussion, but perhaps the students had less say, being first asked in one of their initial meetings and having me speak at an early session. At any rate I was given 'carte blanche'. I accepted it, and took the next term to decipher the invisible writing! I gained immediate access to almost every area of the Course's activity with two notable exceptions: the Policy and Administration Committee in which the fieldwork teachers were represented, and the tutors meetings. The gates of the first opened eventually after Christmas, those of the second were not destined to do so.

Data collection posed the next set of problems; its collection involved the heightened use of observation and a/...

a differential use of interviewing skills but was fascinating - its recording further dilemmas. The literature is full of researchers rushing into corners to scribble notes and I was no exception, although in meetings and in an increasing range of personal contacts it became possible to take notes at the time. I recorded twice daily, normally at lunch time and in the evening. Notes were taken, observations and interactions recorded, in shorthand and by hand. Some material was taped, and when my wrist failed I dictated material on tape for subsequent recording. I borrowed Whyte's²⁸ method of organising it by date, place of interaction, and content so that ready and relevant access to the original notes was easy. Data was collected from a wide range of sources, meetings, interviews, formal and informal interactions, and in a wide range of places from classrooms to coffee rooms to pubs to that never failing source of material - "the Ladies". Use was made of semi-structured interviews and of questionnaires. The latter were to a large extent unsuccessful the product of my inexperience I fear, for silly questions get silly answers.

Finally there were issues of confidentiality central to the study. If I was to use methods which utilized the informal as well as the formal people could well feel vulnerable, and indeed at intervals did. Much depended on the integrity of my own position here, and on my own professional standards. It was important to be as Parlett puts it 'unobtrusive - without being secretive, to be supportive/...

supportive without being collusive, to be non-doctrinaire without appearing unsympathetic'.²⁹ The gain has been in the richness of the material so freely shared with me by tutors, fieldwork teachers and students, which in turn creates the necessity of safeguarding individual privacy in reporting. To this end names have been changed where individual students for example might be identifiable, the care has been taken to safeguard individual anonymity. I can only hope that the study will in some measure reflect the honesty, enthusiasm and trust of the participants.

PART II

Part II

This section deals with the participant observation stage of the research. The material is extensive and complex in nature. I have, therefore, divided it into five sections following a short account of the context in which the study is set. The five phases are:

1. 'Beginnings' - The Initial Phase.
2. 'Worlds Apart' - The First Term.
3. 'Worlds in Conflict' - The Second Term.
4. 'IT - the Resolution' - The Third Term.
5. 'Endings and Reparation'.

In each phase the material is divided into a consideration of the teaching input and course structure, the preoccupations and struggles of the student body followed by those of the fieldwork teachers. The concerns of the tutors, the world of the management, are outlined last.

In writing up I have endeavoured to be consistent both with the paradigm used, and with the actual process of 'making sense' of the data which ensued. Consequently I have recorded in some detail the complex day to day world of the social work course as it was available for study within the phases 'Beginnings', 'Worlds Apart', and 'Worlds in Conflict'. As greater clarity about the processes under study grew I have reflected that developing understanding by narrowing focus and eliminating peripheral concerns in the phases 'IT - the Resolution' and 'Endings and Reparation'.

Finally/...

Finally, at this stage, I have appended for easier reading a short summarized chart to each phase in the light of my developed understanding which, if read in conjunction with the final chapter, provides a short cut to the essence of this part of the research.

CHAPTER IV

Chapter IV - The Context

The time is October 1972. The purpose of this chapter is to attempt to introduce you to the place, the people and the organisation of the Edinburgh Course. A necessary exercise if the remainder of the study is to be intelligible, vital if the search is for new understanding of the struggles, conflicts and satisfactions of staff and students alike. For it is within this context that fieldwork has to be considered if it is really to be an integral part of the educational process.

First of all, however, I want to draw attention to three important factors. They represent as it were the back cloth against which the course must be viewed. The first and most obvious was the rapid development of services in Scotland, and the confusion which still existed following the re-organisation of the local authority social work departments in 1969. Further re-organisations were in the air and beginning to engage thinking; the Local Authorities and the Health Service. There was a growing awareness of the possibility of gaps between education and practice. The practice experience of tutors lay, in the main, back in the old systems, and there was a sense of developing tension as within a changing situation there were pressures to connect with new developments in theoretical and practical terms.

Additionally the Course was still in transition to what might be called a truly generic position. Its origins lay/...

lay in three separate specialist courses. The first and oldest (in fact the first of its kind outside L.S.E.) was for psychiatric workers started in 1946, the second for medical social workers in 1954-55 (also the first University course) and the third for child care officers in 1960/61. Traditionally there had been a core of generic teaching taking as its focus Human Growth and Behaviour and Social Work Method, but the problems associated with 'paring' away or reducing the content taught historically by the allied disciplines, notably medicine and psychology, were still evident. Other administrative anomalies concerning attendance at agencies remained, and indeed initially the problems of integrating the three 'streams' had been most evident in the agency context. The generic concept necessitated considerable, even radical, rethinking of some content together with a commitment to extending the range of practice experience in terms of both method and level of intervention. It involved too difficult decisions about breadth versus depth in considering the material to be covered within the already packed one year programme. Attempts to cover too much ground result inevitably in over simplification, 'Mothers Union type lecturettes', yet insufficient coverage fails to equip the student for the complexity of practice.

The third factor calling for urgent attention, and one which was to loom up again and again throughout the year, was the expansion of the Course. For the first time the student/...

student numbers had risen to fifty; the figure for the preceding year had been forty. Three new staff members had been appointed to help meet the pressure, as further expansion was predicted. More supervisors were inevitably required too - the figures for the previous year had been five tutors and twenty seven supervisors, the equivalent for the 1972 session was eight tutors and thirty five supervisors. The Course had in effect 'grewed like Topsy' and the rather experientially orientated administration had not kept pace. The initial impact was of a much enlarged student body and of staff groups who did not know one another and therefore needed to test each other out. There was a greater sense of increased size than the actual number warranted. What did become increasingly clear was that the old 'ad hoc' ways would no longer suffice and the expanded Course needed new methods of administration, teaching and communication consonant with its increased size.

To return then to the place, the situational context of the Course. The problem is how to decide what to tell, the purpose in telling it at all to highlight aspects which have affected and continue to affect the Course's development. For a Course self evidently cannot exist in isolation and needs the interest, support and involvement of an everwidening range of people and agencies in the community - a communications burden which tends to be overlooked and neglected in the assessment of priorities. A range/...

range of perspectives are possible. I offer two briefly. The first comes from the Scottish Tourist Board, 'Dramatically spectacular in its natural beauty, rich in romantic and classical adornment and fascinating in its historic and literary associations, Edinburgh is a city of contrasts, of wide thoroughfares and narrow cobblestone closes, of Georgian elegance and medieval charm, a city of hills surrounded by hills, a city by the sea, with nine miles of interesting coastline'¹. The second more directly related to social work may be gained from a perusal of the Scottish Social Work Statistics for the year 1972.² The picture emerges of a social work department second only in size to that of Glasgow serving a home population of 449.6 thousands with a relatively high percentage 18.3 (as against Glasgow's 16.2) aged sixty five and upwards. The figures are difficult to interpret as there are indications that different authorities define problems differently but the proportion of children received into care because of homelessness is for example over twice that of Glasgow for the same period. For children in care, for families assisted under Section 12, for the home help service, the figures run steadily second to Glasgow, but the service demands are higher than elsewhere in the country. What is striking is the low level of services to the disabled and to the mentally ill, the latter being virtually apparently non-existent, as well as the apparently low level of probation and supervisory work carried in relation to that in Glasgow. The/...

The reasons are not clear from the figures, but what is clear is that whatever the beauty and tourist facility of Edinburgh, the problems associated with a big city in terms of housing and environment, of community breakup and delinquency, unemployment and poverty create considerable stress for the social work department. Finely stretched geriatric provision within hospitals and local authority add to the tensions, long waiting lists for permanent care feature, as does a history of considerable voluntary care for the elderly not matched by the City itself. Voluntary homes, built and staffed for a different era, find the pressure of the frail elderly today almost impossible, and the demand for flexible domiciliary help far out stretches the existing services.

Social work has its origins in this area largely in voluntary societies and in medical care. The absence of many trained workers in the local authority service made the establishment of good practice standards particularly difficult and a focus of much work for the University Department. It is only comparatively recently, and more certainly since the Social Work (Scotland) Act, that the local authorities in the area have begun to play a major part in the training programme. It will be seen however that even in 1972 the proportion of placements available within the Health Service is substantially higher than that available elsewhere. In this Edinburgh has been fortunate and owes much to the teaching hospital tradition with/...

with its commitment to training of all kinds in association with medicine. So it is a beautiful city, but perhaps a dour one, with running through the background ideas still about independence, worth, keeping to oneself, and the unacceptability of outside help, a culture perhaps essentially antipathetic to a social work ideology.

The university lies near the centre of the city and has as its focus a beautiful Georgian Square, filled with trees and flowers. Here, in a modern purpose built University block, is to be found the Department of Social Administration. It occupies three floors and faces south. The impression is of light modern surroundings where character is sacrificed to functionality. Small well equipped offices open off narrow corridors all of which look alike and are vaguely reminiscent of the bowels of a cruise liner. The social work department is on the top floor. It consists of a suite of offices opening off one of the aforementioned corridors. It has at one end a small library which seats comfortably about thirteen students. The narrowness of the corridor inhibits chat or 'loitering', and there is nowhere for students to congregate or talk except the library, which in any event cannot fit them all in. There is no students' room, though small 'lockers' for books are provided in the corridor wall. The department is hence a difficult place to 'be' in unless a student is with a staff member or working in the library, as there is nowhere to 'be'.
Staff/...

Staff are in difficulty too. They have an office each but no staff room or place to meet informally.

Teaching takes place in small groups in individual staff member's offices, or in lecture situations. Lecture rooms available are on the ground floor of the building, long narrow rooms equipped with dais, desks and chairs (upon which the designer assuredly never sat). Furniture can be moved once a day with the help of the patient servitors to achieve something more informal, but the constraints are considerable. No smaller rooms are available nearby for small group discussions, a further dilemma.

The basement of the block offers resources in the shape of a students' shop, fleet of lavatories, and a large student cafeteria, the focus of all the students in this part of the University. Frequently it is difficult to be served without facing a long queue, and difficult too for more than a small number of students to find seats together at the times they most regularly require them. These details may seem mundane but the point I want to make is that the interaction possible for ^{the} student group, both within itself and between staff and students, is significantly affected by these arrangements. Couple them with the time constraints imposed by a packed curriculum and the impact on the situation is, I believe, considerable.

The course itself is planned on a concurrent basis. The students spend Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays in placements and Tuesdays and Wednesdays at the University. Tuesday/...

Tuesday mornings are designated for individual tutorials (students have one each a fortnight) and for reading.

Tuesday afternoons are taken up by a small group discussion on social work method which meets throughout the academic year and lectures. Generally all Wednesday is spent in lectures, with twenty minute breaks for coffee and tea, and one hour approximately for lunch.

Placements involve the students in widely differing amounts of travelling, for example some will be placed in the Royal Infirmary, ten minutes walk from the University, others in Dundee or Fife, necessitating long and tiring regular travel daily. The following diagram gives an indication of relative travelling times undertaken.

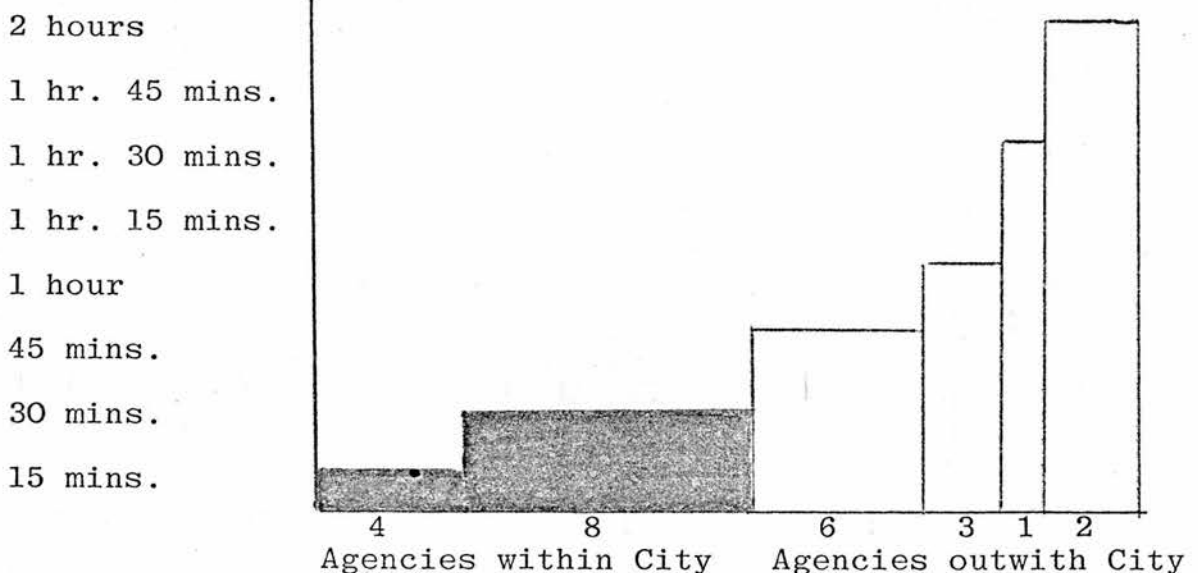


Diagram Illustrating Approximate Travelling Time From University to Agency - single journey. (Figures are estimated on the basis of the usual means of travel employed by students.)

The point I am emphasising is that in terms of expectations and sheer practical day to day demands on time and/...

and physique the going is tough on a course of this nature.

Who then were the people involved? There was a staff group of eight consisting of one senior lecturer, retiring at the end of this year and seven lecturers. Three of these were new and joined the department weeks before the beginning of term. Of the three one had teaching experience, the others did not. The following table gives a profile of their education and social work training backgrounds together with details of previous experience and present post. The figures are based on questionnaire returns (see Appendix C). One staff member did not respond.

Staff Group by Age and Sex - Session 1972/73

n = 8

	Under 25	25-29	30-34	35-40	40+	Not known	Total
Men	-	-	2	-	1	-	3
Women	-	1	1	1	1	1	5

Staff Group - Social Work Qualification and Background

Educational Experience

n = 8

Course of Qualification	Rel. Hons.	Rel. Ord.	Hons. + D.S.A.*	Ord. +DSA*	Dip. + High. Deg.	Total
Edinburgh University			1	1	2	4
English University		1	2	1		4

*Diploma in Social Administration or equivalent.

Staff Group - Experience in Years since Qualification

n = 8

	2	3	4	5	6-9	10-13	13+	Not known	Total
Men	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	-	3
Women	-	1	-	-	-	2	1	1	5

Staff Group - Main Area of Previous Work

n = 8

	L.A.	H.S.	Vol.	Other*	Total
Men	1	-	-	2	3
Women	2	3	-	-	5

*Other includes the English Probation Service/Social Work Overseas.

Staff Group - Present Post and Number of Years Held

n = 8

	Under 1	1	2	3	4-6	7-10	10+	20+	Not known
Senior Lecturer	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Lecturers	3	-	2	-	-	1	-	-	1

Total 8

It is clear even at the beginning of the academic session that inevitable difficulties lie ahead for this group, faced with integrating new members and coping with the prospect of a major change in leadership. Faced too with planning ways of including and using new staff, and of offering them support/...

support, in a new and pressuring situation.

The fieldwork teachers involved number thirty five for the session. Of these 12 are unit teachers, 19 are established supervisors for the course, and 4 are new. These last have come through the University screening process to which I have already referred, but with little certainty as to why they and not some others have been selected. The agencies involved, together with the educational background, training and experience of the supervisors involved follows. The figures are again based on questionnaire returns (see Appendix D). Four supervisors failed to complete the questionnaire, two of whom had been interviewed and two of whom had not.

The first table gives the availability of field teachers in the session:

Availability of Unit and Individual Fieldteachers Session
1972/73

n = 35			
Agencies	Unit Teachers	Individual Fieldteachers	Total
Local Authority	6	6	12
General Hospital	2	2	4
Psychiatric Hospital	2	8	10
Children's Hospital*	0	5	5
Voluntary	2	2	4
Totals	12	23	35

*includes Health Service Child Guidance Clinic

The/...

The high number of hospital placements will be evident immediately. This relates as I have already indicated to the way in which professional social work was influenced and developed within the Health Service in this area.

The next table gives information about age and sex in relation to present area of work:

Unit Teachers and Field Teachers - Present area of work in relation to age and sex.

	n = 35				Years				n/k*		Total
Unit Teachers	25-29		30-34		35-40		40+				
	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	
Local Authority	-	-	2	1	-	-	-	2	-	1	6
General Hospital	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2
Psychiatric Hospital	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	2
Childrens Hospital	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Voluntary Agency	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	2
Totals	-	1	2	1	-	-	-	5	-	3	12
<u>Field Teachers</u>											
Local Authority	1	3	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	6
General Hospital	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	2
Psychiatric Hospital	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	6	-	-	8
Childrens Hospital	-	2	-	2	-	-	-	1	-	-	5
Voluntary Agency	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	2
Totals	1	7	4	5	-	1	1	12	-	4	35

The next table gives information about Course of Qualification together with previous academic attainment.

As before Unit Teachers are dealt with first and individual fieldteachers second.

n = 35

Qualifying Course	Rel. Hons	Rel. Ord.	Hons +DSA	Ord. +DSA	Dip. only	CSW	Or	n/k	Total
<u>Unit Teachers</u>									
Edinburgh University	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	1	4
Or. Scott. University	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
English University	-	1	1	2	-	-	-	-	4
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	3
Totals	-	1	1	2	4	-	1	3	12
<u>Field Teachers</u>									
Edinburgh University	3	-	1	4	5	-	1	-	14
Or. Scott. University	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
English University	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
U.S.A. University	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	3
Coll. of Education	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Other	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	1	3
Totals	3	2	3	6	10	1	6	4	35

Attention is drawn to the extent to which the Course draws on/...

on ex-students as fieldteachers, perhaps an overly incestuous position, but one which has promoted a high level of commitment to the Course over the years.

The next tables give information about the experience range of unit teachers and fieldteachers since qualification.

Experience in Years since Qualification.

n = 35

Agency 2 3 4 5 6-9 10-13 13+ n/k Total

<u>Unit Teachers</u>									
Local Authority	-	-	-	1	3	1	-	1	6
General Hospital	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	2
Psychiatric Hospital	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	2
Childrens Hospital	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Voluntary	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	2
Totals	-	-	-	2	6	1	-	3	12
<u>Field Teachers</u>									
Local Authority	-	1	3	-	1	-	-	1	6
General Hospital	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	2
Psychiatric Hospital	-	1	1	-	2	2	2	-	8
Childrens Hospital	-	1	1	1	1	1	-	-	5
Voluntary	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	2
Totals	1	3	6	4	11	4	2	4	35

While the relative experience of the Unit Teachers is clearly demonstrated it is interesting that the guidelines laid down by the British Association of Social Workers are closely adhered to. No fieldteacher has had less than two years experience and the majority have had a minimum of three. This is a generally satisfactory position.

The level within the structure of agencies at which supervision normally takes place is the focus of the following tables which give details of the posts occupied by the Unit Teachers and fieldteachers together with the numbers of years held.

Present Post and number of years held.

n = 35

Unit Teachers	1	2	3	4	5	n/k	Total
L.A. Fieldwork Unit	1	2	-	2	-	1	6
H.S. Principal I	-	2	1	-	-	1	4
Vol. Agency Senior	-	1	-	-	-	1	2
Totals	1	5	1	2	-	3	12
Field Teachers							
L.A. Senior S.W.	1	1	-	-	-	1	3
S.W.	1	-	2	-	-	-	3
H.S. Principal II	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Principal I	-	1	1	-	1	-	3
Senior S.W.	2	2	5	2	-	-	11
S.W.	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Vol. Agency Senior SW	1	-	-	1	-	-	2
SW	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Totals	7	9	9	5	1	4	35

In considering the main areas of work experience of the/...

the supervisors in the sample it is interesting to note that though there has been some movement into areas of new work the main tendency has been for people to be currently supervising in the same type of agency as that in which the main work experience was obtained.

Present Agency and Main Area of Previous Work

n = 35

Agency	L.A.	H.S.	V.O.	Or.	n/k	Total
<u>Unit Teachers</u>						
Local Authority	4	-	-	2	-	6
General Hospital	-	2	-	-	-	2
Psychiatric Hospital	-	2	-	-	-	2
Childrens Hospital	-	-	-	-	-	0
Voluntary	-	-	1	-	1	2
Totals	4	4	1	2	1	12
<u>Field Teachers</u>						
Local Authority	6	-	-	-	-	6
General Hospital	-	2	-	-	-	2
Psychiatric Hospital	-	8	-	-	-	8
Childrens Hospital	-	5	-	-	-	5
Voluntary	-	-	2	-	-	2
Totals	10	19	3	2	1	35

For them too pressures were already evident. There was/...

was talk of altered content in the Course, some inevitable alteration of the old patterns of communication, new tutors to be met and the awareness of coming change.

Last but by no means least there were the students. Fifty of them for the first time. Forty seven were women, three men, a substantial imbalance. Eleven were already known to the Department having completed the preliminary Diploma in Social Administration the previous year, others had had some contact with the department, the remainder were new, to Edinburgh for the most part, and to the course. The following tables give an abstract of their educational background, age range, sex and previous employment. The figures are based on questionnaire returns (see Appendix E). Five students did not respond, giving a response of forty five out of fifty.

Students Entering Training in 1972 by Age and Sex n = 50

	Under 25	25-29	30 and over	Total
Men	3	-	-	3
Women	32	13	2	47

Students Entering Training in 1972 by Home Area n = 50

Scotland	24
England	19
Wales	0
Ireland	7
Abroad	0
Total	50

Marital Status of Students Entering in 1972 n = 50

	Men	Women	Total
Single	3	29	32
Married	-	12	12
Widowed	-	-	0
Separated	-	-	0
Divorced	-	1	1
Not Known		5	5
Total	3	47	50

Educational Qualifications of Students Entering in 1972

n = 50

Relevant Honours Degree	9
Relevant Ordinary	11
Non-relevant Honours Degree plus Diploma in Social Administration	14
Non-relevant Ordinary Degree plus Diploma in Social Administration	11
Not Known	5
Total	<hr/> 50 <hr/>

Student work experience prior to training fell into four main categories. Experience as:

1. A trainee in local authority or hospital service.
2. An unqualified social worker in local authority or hospital service
3. A residential worker such as care assistant, house parent etc.
4. Student doing general vacation type jobs.

Previous Work Experience of Students Entering in 1972.Type of Experience, Length of Experience and Numbersseconded for Training n = 50Traineeships No. No. Seconded

Local Authority:

1 year's experience	12	7
---------------------	----	---

2 year's experience	4	2
---------------------	---	---

Health Service:

1 year's experience	2	1
---------------------	---	---

Total	18	10
-------	----	----

Unqualified Social Workers No. No. Seconded

Local Authority:

1 year's experience	2	0
---------------------	---	---

2 year's experience	2	0
---------------------	---	---

3 year's experience	2	2
---------------------	---	---

3+ year's experience	2	1
----------------------	---	---

Total	8	3
-------	---	---

Unqualified Social Workers No. No. Seconded

Health Service

1 year's experience	5	2
---------------------	---	---

2 year's experience	0	0
---------------------	---	---

3 year's experience	3	3
---------------------	---	---

Unknown experience	1	1
--------------------	---	---

Total	9	6
-------	---	---

<u>Residential Care</u>	No.	No. Seconded
1 year's experience		
and less	5	0
Students with no		
previous social work		
experience	5	0
Total	10	0

Summary of Experience Obtained Together with Secondment

	No.	No. Seconded
Trainees	18	10
Unqualified Social Workers	17	9
Residential Work	5	0
Students	5	0
Unknown	5	0
Total	50	19

The following comparative table shows the figures in relation to the other University Courses in Scotland for the session 1972/73.³

Course	Under 25			25-29			30+			All ages		
	M	W	Tot	M	W	Tot	M	W	Tot	M	W	Tot
Universities												
Aberdeen	3	9	12	2	1	3	-	-	-	5	10	15
Dundee	4	12	16	3	3	6	1	1	2	8	16	24
Edinburgh	3	32	35	-	13	13	-	2	2	3	47	50
Glasgow	6	16	22	6	6	12	7	1	8	19	23	42
Stirling	1	9	10	3	-	3	-	2	2	4	11	15
Total	17	78	95	14	23	37	8	6	14	39	107	146

Students Entering Training in 1972, by Home Area

Course	Scot.	Eng.	Wales	Irel.	Abroad	Total
Universities						
Aberdeen	11	3	-	1	-	15
Dundee	18	5	-	1	-	24
Edinburgh	24	19	-	7	-	50
Glasgow	30	9	-	2	1	42
Stirling	13	1	-	1	-	15
Total	96	37	-	12	1	146

Student Entering Training in 1972 by Previous Employment

Course	Social Workers				Other		Total
	L.A.	H.S.	V.O.	School Pupils	Stud.	Or.	
Universities							
Aberdeen	7	1	3	-	4	-	15
Dundee	15	2	-	-	7	-	24
Edinburgh	26	9	1	-	14	-	50
Glasgow	22	2	1	-	11	6	42
Stirling	9	3	-	-	3	-	15
Total	79	17	5	-	39	6	146

The figures here agree with mine in respect of previous experience in local authority and health service. There appears to be a discrepancy in the figures for voluntary organisations and studentships.

These then were the profiles of the participants in the/...

the year under review. In the course of the year one student withdrew. Of the remaining forty nine all passed except one. Staff and fieldteachers remained constant throughout the year except for one fieldteacher who left unexpectedly in the third term.

To turn now to the aims of the Course. In summary they are set out as follows:

"This course, in common with developing lines of social work thought both nationally and internationally, sees the aim of social work education as qualifying social workers to practice in rapidly changing circumstances: able to assess social situations, having a capacity to select methods in the light of both clients' needs and basic social work principles, in order to apply the appropriate helping process in working with individuals, families, groups and communities.

"This implies that students should obtain a sound basic knowledge of social administration, psychology and sociology, but in order to be effective in helping people some integration of these subjects is essential".⁴

They are phrased somewhat differently in a statement prepared in January 1973 for the C.C.E.T.S.W. in the sense that there is more emphasis on the 'how' of the process. While the breadth of the experience to be offered is stressed, there is emphasis too on 'the common principles which underlie all forms of social work practice, and on the transfer of concepts from one field of practice to another'.⁵ There is/...

is further stress on participant observation of the changing field of social work organisation in Scotland, and of the organisational implications of change for the social services. There is too a warning note - the necessity of relating aims and expectations to the time available and 'to the realities of the pressures and the level of practice in the surrounding geographical area'.⁶

This paper on the Course is included in the appendix. It is of particular interest in that it was generated by the staff group in the year of the study and not least because it mirrors the Course's values in a quite explicit way. It is quite clear that value is given to the individualisation of the educational process, to a commitment to the generic ideal, to the development a social work 'stance' in education and to the necessity for close working relationships with the field. Certain beliefs also appear clearly about the most useful methods of operationalising these values - for example the importance of the concurrent pattern, and the necessity for a strong support system to enable the student to deal with the inevitable stress of the Course, rather than attempting a reduction in the stress itself.

Additionally it is, of course, a formal statement of the Course's programme, the abstract programme or catalogue description of what takes place. Such programmes rarely happen exactly as written, and views about the reality may differ. In this respect this paper is no exception for the student body viewed it with some derision, "a paper to cover every possible eventuality" was how one student meeting/...

meeting described it.

The course content, however, can be briefly summarised as follows:

University - 40% of time available

Subjects

Methods

Human Growth and

Behaviour

Tutorials

Principles and Practice

of Social Work

Lectures

Social Work Method

Group Discussion

Applied Social

Administration

Films, tapes etc.

Fieldwork - 60% of time

Agencies Used

Methods

General Hospital

Psychiatric Hospitals

Individual or group

Child Guidance Clinics

Supervision

Local Authority Social

Group or Departmental

Work Departments

Discussions

Voluntary Agency i.e.

Adoption Agency

It is expected that knowledge of academic subjects will be so acquired and integrated as to be available in practice.

It is also expected that carefully supervised practice with clients, whether individuals, families or groups, will provide an opportunity for utilizing knowledge and acquiring skills in interpersonal relationships. Emphasis is also placed on the administration and function of particular agencies/...

agencies, as well as their relationship to community need and other social services.

Links between the two parts of the Course are maintained primarily by a fortnightly meeting of tutors and fieldwork teachers which focused on the needs, progress and learning patterns of individual students. This pattern continued, but the expansion of numbers and the introduction of supervisors with different ideas about what was appropriate, altered the focus to something much more general. In the context of this study perplexity about the use of the fortnightly meeting was rife, and I hope to show how in fact they were used. The belief, however, still remained that this was an important 'linking' meeting.

Evaluation was a bone of contention too. The programme provided for evaluation of field performance using the criteria appended, though these were not given to students at the beginning of the 1972 session because they were to be reviewed. Later, unreviewed, they were handed out. Success on the Course depended on passing a written examination and subsequent oral, together with satisfactory performance in fieldwork. The criteria value in particular the ability to relate constructively to clients, the understanding of the external and internal factors operating in a given situation, self awareness, the ability to communicate effectively with other disciplines, and capacity in organisation and administration of work. The achievement of a sense of professional identity is deemed very important. Of this last, in ideal terms it has been written:/...

written: 'to identify one's self fully with the profession of social work is to share its basic values and purposes so thoroughly that these become incorporated in the self. In a sense the individual is thus a reflection of the whole profession and a representative of it'.⁷

Links at an administrative level also bear examination. Historically the Department had invited selected unit teachers to become Honorary Fellows, and included field voices in University Committees on this basis. The alteration of University regulations ruled this out and in the summer of 1972 the fieldwork teachers were asked to elect three of their number to sit on the Department's main policy committee, the Policy and Administration Committee. This committee was chaired by the Professor in Social Administration as head of the Department, and included a representative of the social administration half of the department as well as all the social work teaching staff. There the main policy decisions of the course were ratified, if not taken, and here it was felt the field must be properly represented. The request for representatives raised the question 'representatives of whom?' and the fieldwork teachers formed a group of their own which met throughout the year of the study, sometimes with invited tutors present, sometimes not. Ostensibly its aim was to discuss policy matters, in reality its purpose was far from clear and certainly far from agreed. Of this more anon.

Links, of course, too occurred in 'one to one' and less/...

less formal ways, and in connection with special areas of work, such as selection where fieldwork teachers participated very fully. The link that was interestingly missing and not explored at all throughout the year, was that at Senior Administrative level with the agencies involved. This seemed a curious and yet vital gap.

So this was the picture as I saw it at the beginning of October 1972. Change was in the air, a sense of pressure, of uncompleted planning, was around, as was some excitement about the expanded venture. The 'partnership' seemed all set, the commitment to the field considerable; all that wanted was the 'appointed day' when I could begin to examine the integration for myself. What follows is inevitably my perception of that reality; but I think I have allowed staff and students to speak out clearly for themselves, and in time many of their perceptions cross-checked - both with each other and with mine - so that, in holding up a mirror to the course, the distortion, if inevitable to some extent, is I hope kept to a minimum.

CHAPTER V

Chapter V - Beginnings - The Initial Phase

Beginnings are unique events, tinged with excitement, tension, anxiety. Uncertain too, they provide a glimpse or microcosm of what is to follow. Messages are there if they can be read; sometimes they are clearer with the advantage of hindsight. This beginning had such qualities.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview of this particular beginning, and to isolate for attention those aspects of it which were to recur again and again throughout the year. So familiar were they to become that it was strange to refind them here, even on day one. There is a difficulty at this point in knowing how much data it is relevant to share with the reader, and in what order. In an attempt to achieve an introduction to the 'feel' of the situation as well as to the 'facts' of it some longer extracts are included from the fieldnotes. The order reflects the way the material was collected and for each successive phase focuses first on the Course input (classes etc.) and secondly on the world of the students, on their feelings and preoccupations. Then attention is directed to the world of the fieldwork teachers, followed by that of the tutors, the world of the management. Perhaps this may be felt to be an unusual way round, but it is one which emphasises the student perspective and the interactional nature of the educational process.

The introductory period planned for the student had three stages:

1./...

1. An initial formal welcoming ceremony, which provided information, a context and a summation and acknowledgement as it were of the preceding selection process.
2. A short period of orientating work.
3. A final meeting to introduce students to their prospective fieldwork teachers prior to the actual beginning of the normal concurrent part of the programme.

For fieldwork teachers the pattern was similar. An opening meeting of welcome and professional interest was followed by work meetings of a more day to day variety, and the beginning culminated in the meeting with the students.

For tutors there was the organisation and management of these events together with beginning work of their own as a new group.

I have included fairly full accounts of the principal events because they are of interest in conveying something of the tenor of conduct and feeling evident at the time. The chapter ends with some discussion of the main issues seen to be arising from this beginning.

The Initial Welcome

To begin then with the first morning of the Autumn Term. Approximately one hundred students were gathering; fifty of them were starting the Diploma in Social Administration (the forerunner for many of a subsequent year on the social work course), and fifty the one year Diploma/...

Diploma in Social Work. They were to be 'started off' together. What follows is an extract from my fieldnotes:

"The hum of loud anxious sounding conversation could be heard some distance from the large lecture room. The room itself was crowded with students, some greeting each other with evident relief, others sitting alone, frozen and isolated. Staff came in in dribs and drabs; one brought his dog which caused a ripple of comment. They sat at the front, somewhat uneasily, with their backs to the students. I found myself a place near the front to the side against the wall. I figured I could observe most of what went on from there. Uncertain as to what I should see, and unsure in my new role of participant observer, I too shared the anxiety of the moment. Supposing no one would talk to me, supposing the students did not want to co-operate. Two tutors greeted me with enthusiasm. To one I managed to convey 'keep off', the other plumped down beside me. I was to have considerable difficulty getting rid of tutors.

"Many of the students looked in their mid twenties, the majority were women, in jeans and more formal trouser suits; a small number were very conventionally dressed as if for work. The men stood out, and looked more modern in dress, hair and general appearance than the women. There was a sense of expectancy: the girl setting beside me/...

"me, a first year student, said suddenly, "I feel nervous all of a sudden, I don't know why, I felt O.K. at home".

"The Professor got up to speak and silence was immediate, people were waiting. The welcome was relaxed, informal yet authoritative. He hoped all students would enjoy their time in the Department. The opportunity was stressed of "pursuing thoughts with a measure of independence", the mark of post graduate education.

"Straight talking followed about the links between social administration and social work. The combination of the learning of sensitivity and the understanding of social structure was very important. The conflict between an emphasis on individual relationships and organisational change had grown. It was important that students should challenge, but necessary that their "sense of protest did not become a private pleasure rather than a public responsibility". 'Cheap sneers' about the validity of social work, such as that they were 'do gooders with no public concern' were not useful; neither was it useful to have a group of 'changers' with no individual sensitivity. There was considerable strength of feeling in this area, bridges could exist if they were looked for: he hoped that they would do so.

"Staff introductions followed: They introduced themselves/...

"themselves and conveyed a range of messages about themselves which were received, it seemed, quite seriously - that is apart from the introduction of Sophy the dog who would need help on the linoleum, she slips! One talked vaguely of impending dotage, another more dashing of background and whiskey, the remainder more seriously of years in the Department and of interests. The meeting then ended, the first 'welcome' was over. The Professor and those staff from the Diploma in Social Administration course who were present together with the first year students left, leaving the scene to social work.

"As the room cleared the Senior Lecturer, responsible for the social work course, took over. Informality was the keynote, the impression was somehow given of a change of atmosphere. There was an immediate emphasis on the personal. Apologies were given on behalf of two staff members and one sick student by name, with reasons for absence. The inconvenience of the room was stressed next, it inhibited communication; in future it would be arranged differently. One got the feeling things would never be the same again. It would be more difficult to remember names and get to know people because of the larger group, but the structure of the Course was basically informal. Some would inevitably feel too tightly 'held', it was a full time Course with/...

"with heavy demands on time, but they would have one morning free for tutorials and reading - the laundrette was necessary but reading was important. She wanted to talk about practical details - they could chip in if they wished.

"Business followed, checking over lists already received of essential reading, of fellow students, of the dates for the year. The departmental secretaries and their respective responsibilities followed, in very personal terms, and I began to feel confused, although I knew the secretaries.

Then, with a reference to Sunday School handouts, each student's name was called and they stood very self consciously to receive a piece of paper which gave the name of the student's tutor and social work method group for the year. There was a good deal of reaction to the slips amongst those who obviously knew; most seemed pleased, one or two looked very put out.

"At this point I was introduced and asked to say what I was doing. I said that I was a post graduate student just now, an experienced social worker who was interested in supervision and in the role of the fieldwork teachers. I wanted to canvas the views of staff and students throughout the year, much of it on an informal basis. I hoped that they would come to feel that they knew me and could trust me with their feelings and thoughts/...

"thoughts as students had begun to do last year. I identified my problem as being to move between staff and students and keep the confidence of both, this was essential for success. No opportunity for questions was offered, the students smiled, and said nothing.

"Post graduate students, they were told play a part in gearing the Course. This might or might not allay anxiety, but the discussion groups to be held in the next few days would give them an opportunity to really explore and exchange ideas and to identify 'crunch' points. There would be complaints, they were expected; this arrangement would not change them they would just be different.

"The week's programme for the term was then described. Students looked anxious and began to write - some organised with paper and pencil, others on the backs of envelopes, and on odd scraps. "Any individual timetables?" ventured one of the men. "No, it was unlikely there would enough to go round", he was told. "It is an individual year, you chart your individual pattern against this outline but it is different for everyone, this is how you use your tutorial". He looked confused, but offered nothing further.

"Placements were being finalised. Supervisors met with tutors to "identify learning patterns and consider how to facilitate learning". Matriculation was/...

"was necessary but the space left in the timetable wrong: did they need X-rays? No one really knew - a lot of anxiety focused on this. A lecture on the use of the library followed. The expectation was that they would misuse it, lose books, fail to register borrowing; it had all happened before. The students sat still and listened and said nothing.

"The meeting was adjourned for coffee - my first attempt to meet the students foiled by a tutor who attached herself to me, and by a second anxiously waiting to make an arrangement to meet - the students retreated to the cafeteria, the staff to the third floor, the day was over - and nothing further save individual meetings with tutors were scheduled for four days. I felt flat, having got steamed up to do I don't quite know what. It was over till Monday or was it? The students were still in the cafeteria. Nervously I went in and actually saw a student I knew. She greeted me, "isn't it strange being on the course, sitting all that time was difficult", and I had two introductions!" (Fieldnotes 5.10.1972)

Orientating Work

The programme for the following week aimed to introduce the students to the Scottish social work scene, and to provide an opportunity for the exploration of some of the dilemmas of social work education. There were a combination/...

combination of large lecture situations focusing on the dilemmas of social work education and Social Work in Scotland, together with Helen Perlman speaking on political change ideologies. There was too an opportunity for me to talk formally about my research and plans at the end of the week.

Small groups were taken by two tutors each and were unstructured. The issues raised ranged widely, but came back again and again to the nature of social work and the problems of political action and community change. There was a good deal of helplessness expressed about the effectiveness of conventional social work, and disillusion with the structure being created within the local authority departments. Essentially it kept turning into discussion between workers who 'knew', and there was a noticeable lack of 'student-like' activity. Workers were discussing with workers the problems of a scene in which they were engaged. The vividness and immediacy of work experience for the majority of the group reminded me that some leave takings had not yet really 'happened', and that the business of change to the student role had yet to be achieved.

Indeed there was evident preoccupation with the student role. Searching questions were asked me about what I had felt, how was it possible to relate to the staff? The coffee queue quickly emerged as a place where current themes were freely expressed. That first week rang with complaints.

"Fancy/...

"Fancy being expected to sit all that time on those chairs". "I'm used to jumping up every two minutes to answer the phone"; "it's a vicious circle, they want us to tell them how to teach us so they can teach us differently, so that we can tell them, and so on"; "I'd rather have started with some real work, getting down to the job"; "a breather is nice when you've just left a job". (Fieldnotes 9.10.72).

Information was exchanged about staff members, who was who, who taught what. I noticed that all staff were called by their christian names, though not to their faces. Attention focused too on the 'divide' between social administration and social work. Students who knew the Department made it their business to explain the position to others, "Mary said gleefully, the 'divide' is showing clearly - there's a clear division between upstairs and downstairs, they'd realised that last year". Social administration was a "different world", and scorn was poured on the idea of its being a subject in itself.

"It's a preparation for social work what ever they say; the theory is it'll turn out housing managers and administrators, but that's a fantasy, I've never met a housing manager on it yet". (Fieldnotes 9.10.72).

Choice of Course too featured as an important topic. Students explained to each other why they had come here. The reasons not unnaturally varied from being married and/...

and committed to the area, to having heard something of its reputation (as good), to wanting for personal reasons to leave their own home or University areas. Others had liked the selection procedure, they felt welcomed. One student, silent in the group discussion, told me afterwards that she'd been surprised to be selected here. She would have preferred to go to Stirling but feared that the roads would be bad in Winter and travelling from Edinburgh a problem; - "This Course had a bad reputation", but she would keep the reasons to herself for the present. (Fieldnotes 9.10.72).

Much work was evident too in the business of creating new relationships between themselves. Initially there were three main groups of students, though these merged to some extent as the year developed. The Edinburgh people, up from the Diploma in Social Administration of the previous year, or Trainees returning for training, knew more people. Leaders from last year were there, and there was a sense of a group who knew each other and the ropes in quite an intimidating way. Second came the Irish, clinging together initially, and perceived by the others as a much more coherent group than in fact they were. Thirdly came the outsiders; students from England or more distant parts of Scotland, who felt they had less immediate group support, and if in digs were very isolated indeed. Some shared a hostel and met each other that way, but personal anxiety and negotiation were/...

were very evident as students struggled to find a place and to begin to belong.

Initial Welcome for Fieldwork Teachers

Meanwhile the fieldwork teachers too were emerging from the world of their agencies to start the term. A number of meetings were programmed and they were well attended. The student placement list was almost finalised and most supervisors knew how many students were coming, and mostly who they were. The first meeting, something of a highlight, was one with Helen Perlman who spoke clearly of "the most potent learning experience" which takes place in the field and of the major problems: the time constraints, the difference between education and apprenticeship, between education and therapy; students as clients or carbon copies of supervisors, of selection of work and the spontaneous interweaving of class and field. Substantial if fragmented discussion on the problem of teaching in the field followed. I found myself relieved that nothing earthshattering seemed to have come out of America!

Fieldwork Teachers Begin Work

Business was to follow, a lunch time meeting convened ostensibly to elect a third representative to the Policy and Administration Committee; additionally however it was "to talk about problems we are having with the Course". All the fieldwork teachers were there, one tutor represented the staff. The meeting proved both interesting and heated:

"First/...

"First for discussion came the fortnightly meetings between tutors and fieldwork teachers, traditionally seen as central to the Course/field relationship. Some haggle ensued about the membership of groups; there were to be four, each consisting of two tutors and nine supervisors. This represented a change in policy, up to this point all tutors had attended each group, the focus being on the individual learning patterns and problems of students. Feelings flared, the availability of tutors was in question. What was the use of discussing students if the relevant tutor was not there? Disagreement arose as to whether it was useful or ethical to discuss students anyway. When would they talk to tutors then? Could they be available at the end of meetings? The tutor present intervened pacifyingly, they could always phone. It always takes at least three calls to get anyone was the reply. Would each supervisor be dealing with one or four tutors? This clearly hadn't been thought of, and the answer was possibly four! How could there be real communication if you couldn't get hold of the tutor, and if in any case you were dealing with up to four? The group were angry now, refusing to be pacified - why should the responsibility for communication be left to the supervisor anyway - it was a joint responsibility. Perhaps tutors could bring themselves to visit agencies more frequently than/...

"than they had in the past!"

"Simmering, the meeting proceeded to an election.

A college educated supervisor was proposed, and protested about lack of University experience.

This caused amusement and the comment "that's probably an advantage and will bring some sense to the proceedings". The election was unanimous".

"Then my presence was acknowledged and welcomed.

I fear there was a sense in which I was seen as someone who would identify with what felt then

like a 'cause', but I felt very accepted".

"The chairman then announced that there were to be changes in the Course, it was to be organised in themes. She commented that she "did not understand them and could not convey them. They, the tutors, would just have to come and explain them themselves if they were going to change things in that particular kind of way". Silence ensued, it felt angry, nothing further was said; strange if the Course was being now organised by themes - what themes I wondered".

"Further animated discussion followed, on the theme of education and therapy. They had felt too strongly to talk about it in a "public" meeting.

The line between was much finer than Helen Perlman had indicated, the methods were similar; one member said "all learning involves depression", and this was accepted by the group as evidence that they/...

"they were correct, there are some things you can't split up easily".

"The final straw was discussion about background information - traditionally handed to supervisors in advance of the student's coming, and disputed as a practice by some of the previous year's students. This year minimal information would be given only, but supervisors could read the file at the University if they wished. Again discussion flared; some agreed, some did not; but all were agreed that the University should make the position clear to the students who in turn were perceived as having caused a great deal of unnecessary difficulty. I was appealed to for further information because I'd met the students last year. Unwisely, I offered that the reasons the students had given had been different to any I'd heard discussed today. They complained only because a) they did not know that the supervisor got the information, and b) some of it was incorrect. One student had seen his and found he had difficulties with a sibling who did not exist! The chairman said hastily that it was time for the meeting to end and it broke up quickly. People avoided me and went out. I felt I had made a bad mistake!" (Fieldnotes 11.10.72)

Additionally those supervisors who were beginning to supervise for the first time were the focus of special attention. They met with three tutors to orientate themselves/...

themselves immediately prior to the student's first venture into the field. Ten in number, they varied widely in experience, from fieldwork unit teachers working with Edinburgh for the first time, to those with two years experience of practice. Three were male. Some had just received the papers about the Course that morning, did they have to read the reading list? The problems of placing students were aired first, the criteria used in placement were background plus experience of social work plus preferences, and whether a car was necessary. How they were applied was not clear, but this was not questioned. The question of background information inevitably arose again - a tutor commented "this is a big issue". Supervisors were told that the students knew the position, basic information only would be given, it had been made clear; how or when was far from clear, and dissatisfaction was expressed by the supervisors. The matter remained unresolved, clearly felt to be 'tricky'. Associated problems raised were in relation to the relationship of the supervisor to the agency, who should have access to information about the student, and should records about the student be kept in the agency?

"What do students know about supervisors?" was the next question. "Practically nothing" was the immediate response. My face must have changed, I was to grow ever more aware of how expressive my face is and how carefully my expression could be watched, /...

"watched, "is that not true?" to me. Helplessly I volunteered 'but you sat beside me in class this morning'. This meant nothing to the tutor concerned and, withdrawing a little, I made a reference to a bush telegraph. (The whole focus of student discussion round us in the classroom that morning had been 'who was who' in the fieldwork teaching world. The conversation had been loud and obvious, "so and so knows Miss X", "Miss Y is super, I've met her". "I think you'd better watch out with Mr. Z". New supervisors were being identified and a remarkable amount of personal information changing hands).

"This created real anxiety, what would be said, what could they really know. The attempt was to banish the thought; eventually convinced that little of import could be known, the meeting returned to choice of beginning cases and the span of work to be undertaken. No directives were given and the discussion was usually indeterminate, in the end people would do what they could. Afterwards I apologised to the tutor concerned; yes it had been a mistake hadn't it, was the response, even if it was reality." (Fieldnotes 16.10.72)

The Final Meeting - Introductions to the Field

Finally, there was the coming together of the whole Course membership for the first time, tutors, fieldwork teachers and students. The purpose was for fieldwork teachers/...

teachers and students to meet.

"The event was a tea party which took place outside and inside a large lecture theatre (of the sloping variety). Tea was served from a large urn (paper cups and biscuits) in the Concourse outside the theatre, a big open space where other students came and went. Students tended to congregate anxiously inside the theatre, supervisors outside. Tutors ran round with lists accomplishing "pairings".

"I've matched two good pairs so far". Students, anxious, smiling, and "on party manners" were escorted to meet often equally anxious supervisors (especially first timers) - it was like introductions at a party. Stilted conversation ensued ... gradually supervisors took attendant students to various parts of the lecture theatre and "held court". The room was full of the buzz of anxious conversations as "getting to know you" began. Tutors were much in evidence "have you met your supervisor?" "who is she or he?" "where are you going?" as the awful truth emerged that some supervisors had not appeared. Belated apologies did little for the abandoned students who got farmed out to others who might know the agency at least. These students seemed particularly ill at ease and lost.

"I suddenly felt very spare, what should a researcher do now? I sat down where I could overhear three sets of conversations and took some notes. All of them/...

"them were talking about agencies and agency practice, often in quite complex and detailed ways. The supervisors engrossed in lengthy description, the students looking at them, asking few questions, seeming to be trying to see what sort of person is this, will it be alright? After about an hour people began to drift away, they seemed more relaxed, a meeting had been achieved. "How could anyone have chosen a room like that?" commented a weary tutor, "what a place to choose" echoed another". (Fieldnotes 16.10.72)

So ended the orientation phase, one in which much beginning energy and anxiety had been invested. And what of the tutors? The management as it were? What had it been like for them? My contacts had been in a range of individual discussions, often in passing, but the tension was evident. Already three had talked of intergroup conflicts and pressures, the Course planning was not very far advanced, and the pressures of fifty students and more supervisors were being felt. New staff found the ethos perplexing, the apparent 'ad hocery' of the organisation embarrassing; it is probably not surprising that I felt excluded at this level to some extent, the opportunities for contact were more limited, and the disunity made for individual discussions anyhow. Beginnings it seemed were not easy for anyone.

I have taken the liberty of recording this beginning at some length at the risk of boring the reader because it/...

it gives some indication of the kind of data that was to be available to me, and because there are as I have indicated aspects of this sample that can usefully be highlighted.

Within the Department itself the 'split' between social administration and social work was already common knowledge. Indeed it was institutionalised as it were by the student group within the first week. It became an accepted fact, and influenced thinking about the department and beliefs about staff thinking and values. It was too to provide problems of divided loyalty for some.

The plant was already proving inadequate; in the lack of student space, of facilities for more informal interaction between students, and indeed between students and staff, and in the size of the library as a place to meet. The combination of structure and timetable limited the range and possibility of interaction.

Within the Course the value had already been squarely laid on individualisation of the educational process. The organisation already gave signs that it did not adequately support the concept, for example, the lack of individual programmes initially, the mistiming of the beginning timetable and the failure to adequately plan for the individual communication needs of the fieldwork teachers. As this phenomenon became more familiar I called it the "as if" syndrome.

Staff/...

Staff constantly behaved "as if" the Course had twenty students instead of fifty; "as if" plans could be made with the field easily, and on personal networks whereas the numbers involved created complexity of arrangements, communication breakdowns and consequent ill feeling; "as if" a classroom of fifty students could respond as would a group half this size to often very personalised material. It emerged again and again as a phenomenon usually with little awareness of what was happening; a large group trying to behave as a small group, and not succeeding. It seemed that there was an essential conflict here between values and management strategy which affected planning, teaching and placement organisation; and which was in turn experienced by students as contributing to mismanagement, double bind, the sense of never being able to win.

The 'partnership' too felt uncomfortable. Beliefs about the necessity for collaboration were strong, the intentions of the highest. Was such failure as existed due merely to organisational weakness, or to more subtle factors? Did the classic stereotypes familiar in social work education play a part? Bert Schacter sums the position up:

"Some academics suspect those in the agencies of having their hearts and minds fixed in archaic practices. They assume a constraining effect of agencies on all under their influence. They assume/...

"assume that practice remains traditional, moribund and tied everlastingly to the status quo. They envision genuine liberating scholarship emerging almost exclusively from the University.

"On the other hand, those in the agency world see the academic teacher of social work lost in an ivory tower, spinning theories which have little relevance to practice, prolific in words and abstractions but showing little understanding of the pressures, realities and excitement of work with real delinquents, real mentally ill - in other words: with real clients"¹

Nearer home, the Council for Training in Social Work had recommended in 1971 that "Educational institutions and fieldwork agencies should jointly study the implications of their partnership in social work education".² Partnership, collaboration, a search for meaning turned me to the dictionary.

The Concise Oxford Dictionary gives partnership as "sharer, person concerned with other in business of which he shares risks and profits, husband, wife, companion in dance", and collaboration "work in combination especially at literary or artistic production, co-operate treacherously with the enemy". An interesting selection of possibilities, the last of which currently felt nearer the truth!

Mystification in the collaborative enterprise was already evident. Questions were arising; were field teachers/...

teachers visitors, well known guests, partners, people in a contract with the Course? If the last, what was the nature of the contract? Were they really to be part of the management of the Course - or what was the reason for the appointment of representatives to the Policy Committee? Or were they to be educational advisers to the Committee on fieldwork matters, or links, or bearers of messages, or what?

I think that you are seeing the traditional model of Course/field relationships under stress. The increase in numbers, the enhanced status of field teachers, their developing awareness of personal educational need, and the recognition of staff uncertainties all play a part. Above all, however, the fact that stands out is the pressure under which all concerned felt themselves to be operating, and the failure frequently for one group to recognise another's reality.

Data Collection Issues - the creation of a liveable world

The complexity and amount of material available to me within the initial phase warrants attention, for data was to increase rather than decrease as I worked to create the conditions within which enhanced communication at a range of levels would be possible. The need was to establish a 'liveable world'.³ Having already outlined the research strategy I intended to employ the implementation now became important, the method integral to the understanding I was developing of what was happening around me. "By existing together through time, researchers/...

researchers and actors develop a sense of "we-ness" or an "intersubjectivity", which presupposes the existence of a shared world".⁴ "The creation of what we have called "the shared liveable world" involves the shaping and building of a common culture around the essentially marginal identity of the researcher".⁵ It is this creation and maintenance of meaningful and mutually understood roles which then structures and controls the information which may be obtained. The theory sounds fine, the practice a difficult matter. I wanted to move about the Course as a researcher, and found that this was not always the role in which others cast me. I was carrying a differing set of images from the beginning. I was researcher, but also student, and experienced social worker; and had to work hard at the business of maintaining my research identity. While it was difficult if students related to me as another student which they did initially when their own role discomforts in this area were acute - perhaps because I was still breathing and had managed my own - it was dangerous for the success of the research if a student tried to see me as therapist, or knowledgeable about their particular problem at a point in time. Whilst aware that some students did attempt this I found it possible not to succumb, even if my attempts to correct the balance were not immediately 'heard'. The problem was how to be around and create the necessary relationships within which material could be generated. Here the structure and timetabling affected what was possible. There was a/...

a day and a half in which students came together. For the remainder of the time they were in placement, some singly, some in small groups of up to four. The timetable, as I have indicated elsewhere, was packed.

Opportunities offered in a regular week in the following places: 'the ladies' before classes; before, during and after classes; in the coffee queues and during the short breaks for meals; in the pub afterwards. Some opportunities for social contact took place, they were limited for the students too, and I utilized any of these that I could. Later student meetings were to be added, but the bulk of student contact was informal as described, but regular in pattern. However, I struck lucky. I had chosen, for reasons that now seem irrelevant but were related to a vague feeling I ought to try to understand how practice was taught, to join a social work method group. These groups were small, about eight students, and each led by a tutor. They met weekly throughout the three terms, and I thought I might try attending one. I approached an experienced tutor, that seemed fair; and she agreed to have me ^a participant observer. I must participate though, I could not just sit in silence and write. I was fortunate in my choice, I was allowed to be there in the role of researcher, not co-leader; though in fact to remain it became necessary to play a part more like a slightly experienced student. I took care to take a back seat, contributed as honestly as I could in the context of whatever was being discussed, and/...

and tried not to influence the happening more than I could help. As luck would have it the group contained two key people, both of whom had played leadership roles in the Diploma in Social Administration course the previous year. They were articulate, conscious of the possibility of and even, in their view, necessity for, change within the Department, and interested in what I was trying to do. More importantly they belonged to an established friendship network which extended outside the group. They took it upon themselves to help. My presence was 'sanctioned' within the wider student group by their support in interesting ways. In their company students talked freely about whatever they were talking about; on my own for the first term life could be sticky indeed - earnest conversations about the size of the canteen could be my lot! The friendship dilemma is a constant one in this type of research, and I found that I could be misunderstood if I left my friends; experienced I think as abandoning them for other groups. Yet I did not want to be associated with only one group whose perspectives might be particular or different. So education about my role was continually necessary, and acceptance of it grew with time. Indeed in time I was to extend my range to a second and different friendship network at the students' own suggestion, and to get to know the majority of the students at the 'public talk' level. People generally, both staff and students, were fairly incurious about the aim of the study; like Whyte I/...

I found my long explanations not of much concern. Rather people tended to relate to me in terms of their own needs and feelings at a given point, and I was cast in a variety of other roles. Friend, student, ombudsman, recorder of history and grievance for posterity, authority, and author; somehow the experience would be recorded and held for them, and there were many questions about this. For some I think to the end I was potentially a spy, someone who might tell all to the staff, for a small number, about five in all, studiously avoided me throughout.

Data on fieldwork teachers was collected at this stage mainly in regular meetings and in some informal contacts, again in pattern it was regular and freely available. Material on tutors posed more difficulties. I did not have access to staff meetings and the department was not an easy place to 'hang around' in, there wasn't really anywhere to do it. General meetings provided some insight, as did informal interactions, but I remain unhappy with this aspect of the study. Admission to the Policy and Administration Committee after Christmas improved the position but did not remedy it entirely.

Moving between students, fieldwork teachers and tutors presented problems too, but not those I had imagined. I wanted to utilize the $1\frac{1}{2}$ days the students were in the University to meet them. I therefore was around as much as I could, attended classes, had meals in the cafeteria, and generally 'lived' as much as I could in the students' world/...

world those days. Fortunately most supervisors' meetings and other events were on other days so I could divide my time to some extent. Being in class was not easy, I felt caught between awareness of the signals and responses of the students, and the staff, some of whom seemed to feel my presence more keenly than others. Again some staff accepted me as researcher, others insisted that if there I should play a student role - though I found the added complication of playing a trainee in a role play, or something similar quite a strain.

I learned quickly too that my concerns were not necessarily those of the students or staff. The students would listen to my questions politely and try to help, but even as I asked I realised I was often off beam. It reminded me of Doc's homily to W.F. Whyte.

"Go easy on that 'who', 'what', 'why', 'when', 'where', stuff Bill. You ask those questions and people will clam up on you. If people accept you, you can just hang around, and you'll learn the answers in the long run without ever having to ask the questions".⁶

I have already referred to making mistakes and given two examples. I was to make more, and coming so early in the study they worried me deeply. Each time I made one it was unexpected from my point of view; I was being careful, yet somehow could not forecast when I would go wrong. Each time I made one I wrote it down, and began to/...

to achieve quite a list. I thought it would not be long at this rate before I was out on my ear. I had thought that the main problem would be confidentiality; that I would be under pressure, even if not very explicit pressure, to share material from one group with another, and I was being excessively careful. The perplexing thing was that it was not my use of confidential material that caused the trouble, I knew how to handle that; but my use of the obviously available, to me that was. It was no secret that the students, for example, had a grapevine. It had been in an open classroom that I'd first heard it function, and presumably anyone in the room could have heard it; but the tutor I'd sat beside hadn't - it was news, perceived as some special information I held. Neither was there anything secret about the material of my first mistake, it was available and had been for anyone interested to hear, but hadn't been heard.

Light eventually dawned as I studied the list one day. My 'mistakes' acquired a new significance - they had important characteristics in common. They occurred when I transgressed a boundary. That boundary of perception within which a group operated at any given time. An intervention which made available material which lay outwith that boundary created anxiety and defensive reaction. Such interventions implied that I had knowledge of secret material rather than that I, by virtue of a different role and perspective, made different use of readily available data. My mistakes were/...

were characteristically "cross boundary communications", and were dealt with by the groups concerned in equally characteristic ways. There were familiar responses. First, the intervention was apparently literally not heard. It fell into space as it were, a silence would follow, or more extremely a meeting would end, but the intervention would be completely ignored. Second, it created considerable anxiety, as in the beginning supervisors group, and the task of the group became its banishment, at any rate for that period. Third, my contribution was picked up but used to promote the particular concern or fantasy of the group at that moment; it could not be allowed to stand as an independent or separate perspective. In these ways the groups managed me, and made it clear that from their point of view I had transgressed the role cast for me, of researcher into their particular concerns, viewpoints and current reality.

This, however, radically altered my perception of the personal dilemma which the research posed for me. It was not as I had anticipated that I might give away confidential information from one group to another, rather it was to maintain my own identity and integrity as a person and researcher as I moved between three worlds each with its own boundaries and perceptions of the other, each with its own different commitment to the educational process. Each was fundamentally bound by its own perspective, and any breach of boundary resulted in the behaviour already described./...

described. My problem was how to carry awareness of three sets of feelings and preoccupations, often at variance with one another, often fraught with misperceptions, and deal with the conflict which this created within me. Miller and Gwynne, in 'A Life Apart' describe something of the stress of working with the disabled and the oscillations of feeling which this involved. They speak of "mechanisms of calibration" - the use of self as a measuring instrument attempting to find some means of calibrating to correct for some of the distortions. Discussion with a group of colleagues outside the situation on a regular basis certainly helped me to maintain a steadier focus, as did discussion of the particularly difficult inter staff tension issue with my one external supervisor. Free writing and the spontaneous dictation of notes which included feelings helped, but there were times particularly when the groups were locked in conflict, that I wondered whether I would be able to continue and the sense of stress was acute.

I want to conclude this chapter by drawing attention to some aspects of the data I collected, in particular to some characteristics of student conversation. As I have indicated, throughout the study, data was generated in a range of formal and informal situations. It is the informal that concerns us here. I learned to distinguish between public and private conversations, and want to try to identify the difference. Public conversation normally took place in public places, and was accompanied by/...

by the sort of language and body signs that indicated it was safe to overhear it, to join in even without the conversation changing. As opposed to this private conversations were conducted in lower tones, body signals indicated keep away, eye contact was usually avoided, and a quite clear message given. Interrupted, the conversation would change usually, or lapse. The content of these conversations was interesting. Public conversation tended to be thematic, that is it appeared that there were certain topics that were legitimate conversation at any given point, and these related directly to what I came to perceive as the group's work in dealing with the Course. Strangely these topics were widely available within the group, and once tuned to listen for them it was not difficult. They changed too, and what was legitimate today would not necessarily be so in a month's time. Often the first clue would come in the Ladies, or in the coffee queue. It was characteristic of these conversations and topics that they were legitimate - so legitimate that a student I did not necessarily know well, or perhaps had hardly met, would engage in conversation about it in the coffee queue. Role discomfort, placement anxieties, dreadful lectures, reading problems were examples. Wherever I went among the student group the same work was being done, naturally with individual variations, but in thematic terms constant. It was then possible, in a way I had not anticipated, to develop an awareness of the students' work in negotiating the Course and/...

and to be in close touch with their ongoing thinking and feeling. I asked again and again about the origins of the legitimated public work, and usually got the same answer. Anxieties and struggle with the business of learning social work were first shared in private conversation, with friends, in flats, in the agency. Concerns became public about ten days later, and the subject of group and coffee queue discussion. I was later to discover that they were shared with staff in open meetings some time after they became legitimate within the student group. Secrets were not maintained, rather it was the timing of sharing that was important.

To summarise briefly, I had begun to develop an awareness of three worlds in interaction with each other. In one sense all part of the same system, in another separate sub systems each with its own boundary. The developing ideas which I have outlined in respect of the Course's problems and the use of participant observation as a method were to enable me to extend my understanding of the complex processes at work, and it is this understanding of the work of the three worlds, to which I now hope to introduce the reader.

Beginnings - The Initial Phase

Student Learning Phase	Exploratory, Anxious, Dependent
Course Framework	
Students	High Change Expectations
Field teachers	High Change Expectations
Tutors	High Change Expectations
<u>Tasks</u>	
Students	Initial contact with course expectations Initiating contact with students and staff Role change to student role Exploring course expectations
Field teachers	Exploring current course expectations Preparing fieldwork placement for students Initiating contact with students
Tutors	Initiating contact with students Initiating and developing contact with fieldteachers Confirming placement arrangements Mounting beginning teaching programme

Communi-
cation

Mode

Exploratory, Defensive, Primary
preoccupation with own role and
function

CHAPTER VI

Chapter VI - Worlds Apart

"We elevate uncertainty to the status of a theory. Certainty makes it easier to kick, but we have a commitment to interchange within the experience as it happens, this is a principle with us it is up to you to realise your own thing within the framework".

Statement about the Course made in Principles and Practice lecture 22.11.1972.

There is a certain relief about settling down to direct work. Beginnings achieved, both staff and students alike swung with some enthusiasm into the regular programme of the term. This lent shape and rythm to the experience, coloured as it inevitably was by mixed feelings of expectation and apprehension for the students, 'laced' with a not inconsiderable knowledge of Course mythology. At this stage of the proceedings the differing and interacting concerns and tasks of the three groups of participants began to emerge and it is to these that attention is now directed. I hope that a clearer understanding of them will add substantially to our more explicit knowledge of the complex process that is social work education.

Course Input

The programme for the term is more completely available to us now than it was then, but dryer perhaps. Then it was lived, unfolded, required management by both teachers and taught. It is to this unfolding and more dynamic aspect of the official curriculum that I wish to draw/...

draw attention.

The formal programme is appended within the paper submitted by the Course to the Central Council for Education and Training in Social Work, Section 4, Academic Work! In summary, the principal subjects studied within the first term were Human Growth and Behaviour, Social Work Method, Principles and Practice of Social Work and Applied Social Administration. Additionally, classes were offered in aspects of medical knowledge, psychiatry and personal and social aspects of illness. The lecture programme was timed to fill one and a half days per week. All, with the exception of social work method, took place in a large lecture situation in the lecture room described earlier. The potential attendance was fifty students, and the sessions normally lasted one and a half hours each.

Assumptions appeared to differ with regard to the question of compulsory attendance. The staff appeared to hold an unspoken assumption that classes were compulsory. They would not, for example, arrange to see a student privately at a time which clashed with a lecture time. The students acted out a different assumption. That they could 'select out' of those classes which for some reason they found boring, unacceptable or ill timed because of other pressures. Classes 'selected out' however tended to be those held at 9:30 a.m. on a Wednesday morning, the beginning of a long weary day in lectures. Medical/...

Medical lectures, and the Principles and Practice series suffered the greatest decline in numbers within the first term.

Some comment is also apposite here about the dynamic of large group teaching. It became clear early in the term that it was usually the same people who talked or responded in each lecture. The majority just sat, apparently immobilised by the situation, took notes, and felt able to contribute little. Staff came and went, usually pleased if they got a response from the group, but apparently in this first term unaware that each time it came from the same quarter. Notes kept in class of 'the talkers' indicate that there were approximately eight of the fifty students who at this stage carried the discussion for the group. As I highlight later, the often intensely personalised presentation of material with its inherent appeal for an individualised response, was singularly at variance with the dynamic operating in the classroom.

In outlining the 'input' to the Course at this stage it seems appropriate to start with the series Human Growth and Behaviour. This sequence, given by the Senior Lecturer in the Department, held pride of place both in the programme, in the staff value system, and in the students' world. An extract from the paper 'Information about the Course' sets the scene:

"Stages of psychosocial development are considered and/...

"and are linked with the developing stages of human relationship. The teaching attempts to focus on the interaction between generations, attention being paid not only to the developing child but also to the interacting others.

Consideration is given to factors which enable families to cope, in each successive phase, with the vicissitudes and challenges normally encountered".

The series was given to a full class and received with engrossed attention for the most part. Students were involved within the first ten minutes in the difficulties of where to start in the life cycle, and in writing down to hand in answers geared to test where their interest currently lay. For example:

1. What questions about Human Growth and Behaviour do you have in mind at the present time?
2. What ages or stages of development are of the greatest interest to you now?
3. What kinds of problem or problem behaviour do you hope to understand better?
4. What views or theories about personality development and human behaviour do you find it difficult to accept?

(Fieldnotes 17.10.72)

Stress would be laid on the development of the individual within his family, community and culture. The aim would be to assist the helping process by identifying/...

identifying where growth had failed, been arrested, damaged or threatened within a person or his family temporarily or permanently. The nature of the evidence required and theoretical understanding used would be examined as would the identification of the strengths, and weaknesses in particular situations.

The students interests emerged pretty clearly. Thirty one of the fifty wanted special attention paid to adolescence. Twenty nine expressed interest in early childhood. Early adulthood and marriage came next, as did questions, "more sophisticated than some groups have asked", about maturity as a concept and the relationship between intrapsychic and external factors in a problem. Other matters raised were marital problems, delinquency, mental illness and aggression in close relationships. Doubts about theory centred on the significance of the early years for subsequent maturity, and on the preoccupation of fourteen students who particularly mistrusted psychoanalytic theory "with reference to sex".

The lectures for the first term traced the development of the infant from conception to the age of four and ended with two on Object Relations Theory given by an outside lecturer. A theory which was to be much discussed, little understood, and the focus of much anxiety throughout the year.

Opinions about the sequence in the first term varied widely. Some felt it to be the 'highspot' of the Course; others were less enthusiastic - 'wallowing in all that oral/...

'oral and anal stuff. Too much just meandering on'.
(Field notes 6.12.72). It is interesting to note that by the first week of November 127 books had been withdrawn from the class library of which over half were either drawn from or associated with the Human Growth and Behaviour series. By Christmas when 100 books were out 60 fell into this category.

Social work method groups provided the next most discussed class. They were important on two levels. First they provided a place for informal discussion of practice, and second, they provided a reference point within the Course where people could make contact and begin to get to know each other, a difficult business in the circumstances. The groups normally studied case material, using it as a basis for discussion of the stages of referral, relationship and information gathering, assessment and treatment. Often American and quite dated I was surprised that the material excited so little comment from the students. Tutors varied in how they took these groups and much initial comparing took place.

One new tutor launched into encounter. The students were intrigued and/or shocked. ' "Was it a T group?" Pip asked, "My mother once went to one, they can be dangerous". The others weren't sure what a T group was. "We decided that the only way into a closely knit family was to become the dog and acted that out. We enjoyed it, I wonder/...

"wonder if he'll keep it up?" '

(Fieldnotes 24.10.72).

Mostly the groups were more prosaic. They had in common a focus on the contribution of the individual student, and on the integration of thinking and feeling which was to increase in importance. One was believed to be run differently. Defined by the students as a 'groupy group', one in which there was deliberate focus on the 'here and now' interaction within the group. It had more status than the others - at least for its uncertain membership. Its happenings were certainly more widely and thoroughly discussed, though they mirrored the developments in the group of which I was a member.

The relationship of the material to the self became a source of anxiety.

"At tea following a group discussion of a case centering on a thirteen year old girl with sexual problems Joyce said to me: "It's funny I felt the other way round to the whole group. I didn't like my father when I was thirteen the way the others did. I wonder what that means. Y (the tutor) makes me smile, it's clear from the way she puts the questions she wants answers about oedipus and all that. You just can't help wanting to give them to her, it's so obvious"."

(Fieldnotes 14.11.72).

The purpose and boundaries of these groups were increasingly the focus of attention. Stories were handed/...

handed around of incidents which seemed to crystallise the difficulties. Such a story was one which I named "Hilary and the Groupy Group". I heard it four times in different groups of 4/5 students when it was listened to with full attention.

"At tea Judith, Betty, Rosemary and Lynn began to talk about social work method. Judith said they'd had a terrible time for two weeks going on exploring their feelings about the group. One of the group had brought "very personal" material to the discussion. She had been "mourning a relationship and not a person". It had been about her boyfriend. They'd been very uneasy, they didn't think this belonged. "I certainly wouldn't feel safe enough in that group to speak of my personal affairs". X (the tutor) had been very approving, she conveyed that this was how to use the group. A girl who had reasons for not wanting to discuss personal things had been made "the head" and Hilary, the one who'd talked, had been made "the heart". It was the heart that was valued, and this made it difficult for everyone else who didn't want to bring in personal things either. She thought it would be hard now for the two who had been 'labelled' like that". (Fieldnotes 5.12.72).

The four accounts I heard tallied remarkably both with each other and with the participants' individual views of what had happened.

Hilary/...

Hilary felt unsupported by the group and approved by X. "I wanted to use the group in a way that was useful for me". The others were uneasy. Pam said "X behaved as if this was super, the real way to use the group, and I don't think she should have. This made them all angry. She still felt somehow that Hilary was good and all the rest of them bad". (Fieldnotes 6.12.72).

Challenge about the purpose of the groups and the authority of the leadership certainly occurred in some. In others the disquiet seemed channelled into student discussion and story featuring individual disease. The extent to which feeling could be expressed in safety was uncertain. I noticed a heightened sensitivity to the here and now; students would comment on matters such as where in the group they were sitting, and laugh about what this might mean. Indeed in the final meeting of the term of the group of which I was a member the issue of the personal in the group was handled with balance and judgement. It concerned death.

"The case record was of work with a dying woman. The students rejected it. They could not discuss the case until they had explored their own feelings about death. "I'm not ready to die yet" said Pip, "Life's pretty good just now. I'd miss people. I want to go on for the moment". Others picked up the thread and spoke of family deaths, of their belief or otherwise in personal survival after death, /...

"death, of having faith rocked by a close family death. It was a very personal discussion which was subsequently related directly to the worker's attitude and feelings in the case".

(Fieldnotes 12.12.72)

Principles and Practice of Social Work was probably the least well attended sequence. Its timing at 9:30 am was against it. It encompassed a historical review of the development of social work from the late 19th century. An examination of its relationship to Social Administration at each successive phase led into an examination of theories and principles of practice in the various methods of social work. The historical review was most notable for the vagueness of the historical fact and the highly personalised view of history presented, and to a large extent rejected by the students; the lectures on casework which followed for the illustration which accompanied them to which I plan to return later.

Applied Social Administration, which ran alongside, emphasised the discretion and power of the worker and client within the social work organisation and introduced organisational theory. It too focused down on illustrative material featuring the activity of the social worker. As both classes followed each other the impact of this illustrative material was not inconsiderable.

Stereotype of a Social Worker

Here it was that the person of the social worker began to emerge with clarity. And what a social worker! My/....

My own reactions were very strong. The sequences felt to me to require belief in some strange sense, they felt missionary in effect. My notes reflect my feelings.

"This lecture has the air of something important, perhaps because so many staff attend. To be listened to and believed is the message".

(Fieldnotes 8.11.72)

My notes record increasing feelings of helplessness and ultimately anger as the sequences proceeded and I knew less and less what to do with the material.

Coincidentally the students talked of being deskilled and incompetent, but did not seem to relate this in any way to the lectures. The dynamic was interesting.

In class the examples of social work intervention had certain characteristics. They were delivered thoughtfully and confidently by a staff member. They were successful. The social worker who strode through them assessed situations it seemed at a glance - and usually more effectively and in dispute with another colleague, medical or psychiatric. Moreover they were usually right and the other party ultimately saw sense.

Thwarted by inept management within the social work department they took independent action to improve situations, and they managed to instate their policy in the department. "It sounds like magic" acknowledged a tutor after such an example, "if in fact hard graft".

(Fieldnotes 6.12.72). And this was a real difficulty. It was very hard to convey fully the basis on which success/...

success had been achieved and to understand its nature. "Angry and deskilled, always success, success, success", is scrawled across my notes. (6.12.72).

It is interesting that while the staff presentations reflected the competent, knowing and powerful social worker, the student examples have quite a different flavour. They reflect the helplessness of the social worker faced with incomprehensible situations where little personal authority could or ever might be exercised; the social worker as the mystified victim of the system. They reflect anxiety and doubt about action taken, about assessments of situations and people, and about the likelihood of change or helping. They normally arose in the discussion following a staff presentation and it was difficult to deal with them in the classroom. A fairly typical example follows:

"It worried me in the local authority taking over for people. There was one 70 year old man, he'd lost his wife three years ago. He had a foster child of 16 living with him in "deplorable" conditions. A girl arrived with an illegitimate baby from N_____. There was a scuffle and a fight. The boy was accused of stabbing the girl in the right buttock. They'd been waiting for a house for years. It was a very pressured situation. I just hurried up and got them moved. I had a lot of doubts about it afterwards". This was followed immediately by another example, similarly distressing, from another student./...

"student. There was no real opportunity to discuss either". (Fieldnotes 13.12.72)

The transaction here is intriguing. The fieldwork teachers constantly reported on the students "need to know", to have certainty, whilst they and the tutors upheld the virtues of "not knowing". They refused they said to be pushed into being "people who knew". Another incident highlighted the dilemma.

"A visiting American professor was invited to give a paper on the training and use of volunteers. Early in his paper he gave an aside on how he had become involved in this work. As Dean of his school a crisis had occurred for him at home. A student feeling suicidal had phoned him for help. He had not measured up and the student had put down the phone. This traumatic experience had led him to consider the needs of such clients, and the best ways in which they could be encountered and helped. He related this to the development of his volunteer scheme. It all fell on pretty deaf ears. The students constantly reverted to the phone call. What had gone wrong? Why had he not been able to help? Eventually he relinquished his lecture on volunteers to give a lesson on crisis intervention to deal with their anxiety. His lecture gave rise to much subsequent anxious discussion". (Fieldnotes 5.12.72)

The attempt to deal with the uncertainty of the professional took/...

took a good deal of public and private energy.

Indeed it became clear that those classes which were "top of the pops" were those where the material was clear, factual and relatively undebateable. Medical information, the structure of the National Health Service and psychiatry were constantly talked about as the best. Particularly psychiatry. I found this perplexing. The level of anxiety in the hospital lecture theatre was high, the affect quite inappropriate. Slight mistakes or simple jokes on the part of the lecturer were greeted with gales of laughter, and a poorly produced videotape had a similar effect. Leaving however, one Wednesday evening after a solid exposition on senile dementia a student said contentedly

"Wasn't that good? Usually I get all the symptoms but it wasn't so bad today. Its good this comes at the end of the University days, its a relief just nice solid graspable facts".

(Fieldnotes 6.12.72)

On reflection it seems that the task for all demonstrated in these classes is the important one of the management of uncertainty. The nature and origins of this uncertainty may become clearer as we examine the developing preoccupations of the participants over time. Uncertainty there is - about role, about expectations, about assessment, and perhaps fundamentally about self.

The Student World

In spending some time in the student world it is important/...

important to remember that we are looking at what I have defined as the students' public work in managing themselves in relation to the Course. It is to the public process as I identified it that I want to direct attention. I am not trying to say that every individual student experienced the Course similarly, but rather that at different times in a thematic way the student group legitimated concerns, ways of thinking and feeling that enabled them to manage the experience. Very considerable energy went into this work, recognisable as work by the time spent on it, the extent to which it engaged attention, and its widespread nature as an activity within the group. Embarked upon the Course, open to input from class and field, faced with the task of integrating both, of "realising their own thing within the framework", what then were the areas of work for the students amongst themselves?

The first, and I have touched on this in the previous chapter, was the business of becoming a student. Of finding some compromise with the student role to which many were returning after periods of work or traineeship. Perhaps too becoming a social work student should be emphasised as this Course made demands which were different in many respects from any encountered previously. In particular, the beliefs about learning and assessment as a shared process gave rise to doubt and comment. There were mixed feelings about the venture. A typical encounter ran as follows:

"Linda/...

"Linda remarked how strange it was to be a student, the other two agreed. Linda described with much intensity the awful feeling of having everything you do scrutinized. It really made her feel uneasy whereas before she'd have thought nothing of going to see a client. They reminded each other of their previous competence and experience, and I asked whether just now they felt more like students or social workers. They felt confused really, they thought of themselves as social workers, being a student is very uncomfortable. Freda said all the neighbours laughed at her, said she'd have to stop having baths now. "It's difficult coming back to University like that, you don't really fit in like you did before, it feels really odd". I acknowledged feeling a similar pressure to grow my hair and wear long clothes, they laughed "that was just it, you really feel out of it here, our clothes aren't right, all square, it was very difficult". (Fieldnotes 25.10.72)

Amidst much discussion of the discomfort particularly as it affected their vulnerability in relation to staff - how to manage them was perplexing - students were remarkably open with me. I think I was seen then as 'one of them'. For example the following:

"Joy walked to coffee with me, she was pleased to meet me, I was famous already. I'd talked to them in/...

"in the first week. She really respected people who come back to University later on, it was a very hard thing to do. She'd been working herself, it all still felt very strange. She didn't mind me being around, perhaps it would help if more was understood about what went on, and how they felt". (Fieldnotes 25.10.74)

Comparisons at this stage were an important way of dealing with the situation, of checking out the individual students position vis a vis others. Comparisons of feelings about the lectures (expectations and reactions varied considerably as I have indicated), of the social work method groups and their individualities, and of placements. The latter interested me particularly. The first discussions were about first cases, how many and of what kind, and there was a wide variation.

"Lynn said she had five "to get on with and process record". The others looked horrified and Pip said "five?" Lynn thought it was a lot - Pip had one, "my first and I've done the first interview, it's a hummer - I'm quite pleased".

Joyce said they had a difficult history proforma where she was, "we'd really got each other worked up" but her family had turned out to talk quite easily". (Fieldnotes 24.10.72)

They compared size of agencies, small ones felt better; hours of supervision, most were getting 1½ hours a week and this seemed acceptable - and the different work/...

work patterns in the agencies. One Child Guidance Clinic was the focus of much curiosity

"they seem not to have time to see clients they spend so much time in team meetings", and the office seems so quiet "it feels unreal, you wonder where the action is". (Fieldnotes 24.10.72)

Waiting to see, or screwing yourself up to face the first client was much talked about and feelings of anxiety and "feeling scary" were fairly openly expressed. Little was said, however, about supervisors or the detail of personal encounters at this stage. Rather there was a search for a way of handling the situation.

"it's awful for the people who have no cases yet, they (Lynn, Joyce, Linda, Pip) all were o.k.; they compared tutors and supervisors by name, between all them and the social work method "you ought to find someone you could let your hair down with"." (Fieldnotes 31.10.72)

This optimism appeared to recede during the next fortnight, indeed early November saw a period of beginning and intense criticism of the Course, in particular the lecture content and presentation. Little else was publicly explored and I was constantly being pinned down by students to tell them what I really thought of the lectures, which I'm afraid I evaded unless I could honestly be positive. This didn't seem to matter, they wanted their say.

"The days in class were tiring and often boring.
The/...

"The lectures on the history of social work were confusing and terrible. "Will I put flesh on the bones" she'd said, "how could they stop her". They joked about 'Human Growth and Behaviour, psychiatry was good, probably the best'. (Fieldnotes 31.10.72)

"I'm very disappointed in the lectures, they're not coming up to my expectations at all. I came here hoping to learn more, there's nothing much in them I don't know already". (Fieldnotes 31.10.72)

"I don't get much from the lectures, they're obvious, a bit trite I'd say, simplistic, a bit thin". (Fieldnotes 5.11.72)

There wasn't much agreement, however, about which lectures fell in this category. It seemed important to be involved in complaint but some focused against Human Growth and Behaviour, some against Principles and Practice and held quite opposing views. What was constant was the sense of disappointment and dissatisfaction.

Interestingly this was a prelude to a period with quite a different focus. A focus on themselves as individuals struggling with the unclear expectations of the course, and experiencing considerable personal stress as a consequence. The message was clear and started on the 14th November. Bumping into a student I knew in the library she greeted me with

' "the pressure is really beginning to mount now".
It/...

"It transpired she'd only had one case for ages, "it was terrible, I felt so useless, as if I'd never be able to do anything again, ... completely deskilled. Now the pressure is on, a lot to get through, in some ways a relief"."

(Fieldnotes 14.11.72)

The second student, encountered waiting for a tutorial half an hour later greeted me similarly.

"She had a cold, so did lots of people just now, "things are beginning to pile up just now, the pressure is coming on". She is having to work most evenings to keep up with write-ups, process records and social reports. "Last night I got in after two home visits at 6:45 p.m. and then had to turn round and do a social report. It's very tiring and there's no time for writing or reading in the day". (Fieldnotes 14.11.72)

This sense of pressure coming on was evidently related to a range of factors. Much of it was officially attributed to the strains of process recording, which did by all accounts take up an inordinate amount of some students' time. It was difficult for students to judge how widely their problems were shared, they still knew only relatively few of their number, but I heard process recording widely discussed, mainly in the context of the demands it made on time at home in the evenings. This was closely related to anxieties about reading, for there was only so much time in a week.

"At/...

"At tea Joyce and Sandra were talking about reading. That new book list was a blow. They had devised individual ways of coping. Sheelagh said she was reading to please herself, some of the things had turned out to be on one of the lists. Linda was checking titles and assuring herself that some were repeats from other lists and comforting herself that way; all conveyed difficulty about keeping their heads above water, but indirectly at this point". (Fieldnotes 21.11.72)

There was a good deal of uncertainty about how much reading would 'do', and what should be read. Theory did not seem to relate to practice and as one student commented anxiously "what is this casework and where does it happen, it seems to be evading me". (Fieldnotes 22.11.72). Fieldwork teachers' anxieties were picked up about the relatedness of the two parts of the Course, yet it was not yet very safe to risk airing these uncertainties to staff. The situation was compounded by the input in class, the developing awareness that things were not always what they seemed, and the heightened sensitivity to their own current behaviour in group situations. The risks of being open, of expressing negative feelings were great, and anger expressed in one social work method group occasioned considerable subsequent anxiety within the group. "Please can someone tell me what to say at my next tutorial with X" was an anguished request heard in the passage. (22.11.72). No one really could, it was very/...

very difficult. Difficult and summed up by another student met at a meeting later that day.

"Her supervisor had asked her about what she was feeling and about her tutor. What was she supposed to say, it was one thing to tell me, quite another to tell them. "We don't feel we are ready to give much away yet"."

(Fieldnotes 22.11.72)

If the group had difficulty in defining how much work and of what kind was required or would 'do', and in assessing the expectations of authority, they had more anxiety as they began to face the implications of managing that authority. A central anxiety emerged as anxiety about self in relation to the business of becoming a social worker. This is my distinction. I think it was more directly experienced as anxiety about self and survival. The pressures were to some extent intangible. The reader will remember that in Chapter I, I referred to an analysis of feeling swings in first placement experience which suggested considerable emotional pressure as the feeling content of work with clients was encountered. The Course content itself made further demands. The pressures were given different names, as were the means of defence. This time it was myth.

"At tea with Sara, Eleanor, Fiona and Pam, Eleanor said things weren't as dreadful as she'd been led to expect. She'd been told she'd be in "little pieces by Christmas" maybe she would, but so far she'd/...

"she'd survived. "Mainly I'm feeling, what's the word, deskilled". "What gets round about the Course is a sort of myth, it gets built up, that you'll get taken to pieces".... she thought the myth was to put you off, if you really applied in the face of it then you really wanted to come". (Fieldnotes 29.11.72)

Tiredness and exhaustion were frequently discussed particularly in relation to the demands of relating to authority figures. This coincided with the anxieties about self in relation to assessment inherent in the story of "Hilary and the Groupy Group", of goodness and badness and of maintaining a good self. Feelings of depression were beginning to be hinted, of being stupid, or at least feeling it,

"Lynn said at coffee (with Judith, Betty, Rosemary and myself) that a group might be easier than the one to one. She is finding that exhausting. X is her tutor, she doesn't know how to handle the sessions with her, she's really exhausted. Judith said she found that about her supervisor, she comes out exhausted "if usually broken down" she didn't always "feel put together again". Sometimes afterwards she saw things more clearly; the others weren't so sure". (Fieldnotes 5. 12.72)

Exhaustion, heavy work demands in course and field, process recording all compounded the picture, together with a fairly massive rejection of the content of Human Growth and/...

and Behaviour.

"At tea with Doreen, Sheelagh and Sandra, Sheelagh said the lectures today had been good, she'd been made to think. Doreen couldn't remember what the early lectures in the day had been, she felt fogged. They agreed they felt dazed by now, had almost stopped feeling. Sheelagh admitted falling asleep in the one after lunch "she's not an inspired lecturer, goes on rather" they were dying for the end of term, very tired now".

(Fieldnotes 6.12.72)

The final phase of the term had two outstanding characteristics. Firstly attention was directed in a focused questioning way at the activities of the field supervisors, and secondly and quite publicly, depression and unhappiness were legitimate feelings. As usual it happened suddenly.

"As I walked into the Ladies', Pip looked up from an earnest conversation, propped against the wash basin, "say you've just missed a highly relevant piece of talking". She hedged then said, "well it's about supervisors and what they teach - do they agree with the Course what they each do, or did they do whatever they thought?" I said it was a good question - why was she asking, "some seem very good, others pretty bad, a great difference between the experiences, some did one thing/...

"thing and some another".

(Fieldnotes 12.12.72.)

The same afternoon, after class in the coffee queue the student behind me, whom I didn't know, took up the theme.

"I'm just feeling crushed", she said wearily and out of the blue. I asked what was wrong, "its my placement, its no good, and its really getting me down. Maybe I'm not cut out to work in hospital but the others don't care for it much either". Our ways parted and I joined Pip, Lynn, Sara and Bill - the talk was of placements.

(They had been talking of this privately for about two weeks). Pip was unhappy, "its not good". Her problem was that she gets only one hour's supervision per week. The others were shocked, she wasn't asked to do any process recording and the whole hour was taken up in describing the cases. There's no time to really discuss them - she doesn't get help of the quality she'd expected. The supervisor doesn't prepare for the session at all. "Nothing is examined in depth". They liked the place but one of the others had been told she was "too mouselike". Things like that shouldn't be said without warning "it had been a terrible blow". There was little feedback, they didn't know what she (the supervisor) thought. What were they supposed to be doing? What/...

"What happened at the meetings between supervisors and tutors? Lynn knew, she had a good supervisor, did process recording and had plenty of time, he'd told her - "the meetings are very poor, the supervisors are a very anxious group. There is a lack of communication this year". On the way up to the lecture they went on talking about placements - clearly a list was emerging of the good and the bad". (Fieldnotes 12.12.72)

A number of slow sticky lectures followed, people seemed 'plog', they just sat, and there was little animation in the class situation.

"Over coffee with Linda, Pip, Hilary, Carol they just sat, they were exhausted. Someone, I forget who, said "I'm just feeling in the depths", Lynn agreed wholeheartedly. There was a feeling that they, like the Social Studies Society they were vaguely discussing, "had reached rockbottom". (Fieldnotes 13.12.72)

This was the end of the first term. A term of painful relinquishment of past roles and of beginning to grapple with the complexity and emotional dynamic of the material presented both within class and field. The threat to self felt great, the process uncertain as yet in outcome. The progression from anxiety about beginnings and role change, to defence against, and subsequent attempts to manage, the perplexing work demands was evident/...

evident in their preoccupation. The anxieties about self, survival and authority, about being 'good enough', together with the realistic external physical demands of the Course led to depression as an accepted state amongst the group. This recognition and acceptance of feelings of depression within the group marked a clear stage in the development of the Course.

The Supervisors' World

The agency is the primary world of the supervisor, whose main function is to teach practice skills in collaboration with the teaching staff of the Course. It is artificial to attempt to split the students' learning up into two separate parcels, theory and practice, and more important to recognise that elements of both are present in both Course and field. Nevertheless it is in the agency that the student meets the client, encounters colleagues, and 'tests out' his developing skill and understanding. Sixty per cent of the academic year is spent there and success or failure in this area is crucial. On it hangs the award of the Diploma; unsatisfactory performance there may result in the student being required to leave the Course.

Supervisors are key people in the social work education process. So they were experienced by students. I was to hear hours and hours of discussion about them, their doings and sayings, their goodness and badness. It is important therefore to try to understand more than we/...

we do at present about what they do, how they do it, and to identify their relationship with the Course in question. Their individual 'styles' of supervision and particular values and aims are more fully discussed in a subsequent chapter.² Here I want to explore the nature of their links with the Course, and to try to identify the ways they related, their own needs as teachers, and their perceptions over time of their own contribution to the joint business of teaching. What part did they play in the development of the term, and how did they perceive what was going on?

Sources of Data

Material is drawn from two sources. Firstly from the regular fortnightly meetings between tutors and supervisors. I was able to attend all the meetings of two of the four groups which met throughout the year. Secondly from the supervisors own 'policy' meeting from which representatives went to the Policy and Administration Committee - the policy making body for the Course. I was welcome in all these areas though I think my presence heightened anxiety, particularly at first. It had the effect too of saying 'questions about fieldwork teaching are important', and may therefore have influenced some of the questioning which was developing about traditional practice.

Function of Meetings with Fieldteachers

The fortnightly meetings were the main meeting place for/...

for tutors and supervisors. They represented a key part of the interface between course and field which I was interested to examine. Despite uncertainty about function and purpose (as previously described) they were well attended and provided a forum for discussion. They were characteristically used as a place to express anxiety or air thinking; a group to depend on; a place to be free from agency pressure for a short while. They were the place where day to day happenings were recounted and examined, sufficiently usually for those concerned to feel supported and able to carry on. They did not have any executive function and whereas almost every 100 dollar question you could think of in fieldwork teaching was raised there was no real provision for ongoing work or study of the question in any depth. The material which emerged was not 'fed' anywhere. There were no formal links between groups and the tutors groups, indeed no informal reporting even, with the result that the ongoing work of collaboration happened in a series of cut off separate places. This could lead to frustration and anger amongst the supervisors. No records were kept, though beliefs about what happened last month or last year were abundant and provided norms for judging current 'happenings'.

An examination of the records of the meetings I attended reveals that the groups were used in five main ways. These were as follows:

1./...

1. For matters of organisation and for the sharing of information about the Course plans. For example, placement organisation, timing of certain events within the year etc.
2. For discussion of content issues within the Course. What is taught?
3. For discussion of educational issues in social work education. The 'how' of teaching, the inter-relatedness of course and field.
4. For discussion of agency practice, new developments in the field, particular difficulties associated with an individual agency.
5. For sharing thinking about the students' feelings and progress.

Here hindsight has once again lent some clarity.

The view at the time was much more obscure, and the groups spent some time trying without success to identify their aims. Eventually they 'lived' from meeting to meeting evolving a usage as above. It is interesting to note their developing concerns and to see how they compare with the student perspective already outlined. Throughout they identified with the students quite closely and presented their difficulties and stresses to the tutors, often felt to be in some way the source of the difficulty.

Process : Fieldteachers Preoccupations

The shadow of the past year hung heavily on the groups in the first weeks. The students were not the only/...

only group with relinquishing to do. The problems of the purpose of the groups were abandoned swiftly for lengthy discussion of issues related to the previous year, such as the relevance of and availability of background information on the students in the field. These were two main areas of concern. The orientation phase within the agencies, and the 'mess up' which the Course was felt to have made of the first week with its emphasis on the dilemmas of social work education.

First of all then, how and to what extent to attempt to orientate the student to the agency. The achievement of suitable cases was a problem for many, especially the Unit teachers who described many situations of begging from seniors and anxiously attempting to wrest 'suitable cases' from allocation meetings. New unit situations were specially stressful for the supervisor who had many uncertainties to contend with; one in a new team anxiously described a very fluid situation where the team had no real identity yet, no community links and where she did not herself yet know the area. The problems of offering a sustaining experience to students in this set up seemed formidable. The other focus for anxiety was the extent to which students should be introduced to agency conflicts and difficulties - would they be perceived and how if not raised? There felt a real pressure to offer a good situation free of much of this uncertainty and strife.

Alongside this anxiety about orientation ran criticism of/...

of the Course's initial venture. Supervisors said they hadn't really realised the 'build up'. The students were getting 'from all sides dilemmas, dilemmas, dilemmas'. (Fieldnotes 26.10.72). Many students had come from pressured negatively experienced trainee experiences and needed to believe 'that social work can help people'. The criticism was pained - was it good to share this uncertainty so soon - people needed some certainty to grow from. The supervisors kept talking about their and the students' 'confusion', but it felt like anger. Tutors reminded one group that there could be a danger of 'infantilising' students, they were 'adults learning': the students emerged as confused, pressing for certainty and overwhelmed by the book lists the Course had handed out.

Links between theory and practice had as their point of common concern the teaching of social work method at this stage. There was direct criticism of the ancient material being used; some supervisors had used the same case material 2/3 years ago when students; but division existed as to whether they wanted to know the order of, or re-read the case material. One group thought it crucial to the educational process, but didn't continue the practice; the other that it wasn't important.

Dependency - The Central Dilemma

By the end of the first week in November the focus of/...

of discussion for both groups independently was very similar. The students were identified as being in a 'reactive depressive phase' and this was explored at some length.

"They were 'confused', in a panic about the demands of the Course, deskilled, in a vacuum, mourning the loss of role. "One can't help feeling very anxious for them". They had come to the placements "flat", overwhelmed by the beginning of the Course and by being talked at to such an extent. Neither did they have a group identity". (Fieldnotes 8.11.72).

Uncertainty, dependency and lack of knowledge created understandable pain. The phenomena of dependency was central to beginning. Examined individually there was a greater range of student enthusiasm and effective functioning than the initial 'feel' indicated. But supervisors as a group felt like "Authority with a capital A", being pushed to be omnipotent beings who knew. All present felt this kind of pressure.

The student dependency was felt to create pressure about what they should be trying to teach.

" "I'm not very certain as to what I'm training students for" said one experienced medical social worker. There was agreement and the theme 'confidence in our own uncertainty' emerged. "We have/...

"have strength to carry them through". Students were being asked to define, consider, share, "to take account of me and my views in formulating theirs". Goals might vary widely depending on the people concerned. "Like a client really". They are daring to find out about themselves as well as about the client. For students and clients this part is the same, it's their choice. The literature "makes too much" of the differences between the two groups". (Fieldnotes 8.11.72). Their own uncertainty became clearer. Changes in the leadership and content of the Course raised the unknown.

"A new supervisor said "I feel like a student, deskilled, in a vacuum". Another felt it impossible to conceptualise from practice, yet another queried the value of fieldwork, what was its purpose? "I'm not sure if I've ever helped, and if I did will I be able to do it again - things are always changing, like a funnel going somewhere". Another (who paints) volunteered "it's more like creativity; taking steps when not quite sure, taking risks". There is no way of knowing that treatment will work or theory fit, no way that is "till you've done it and taken the risk". "You need some sort of faith you helped someone in the past, you just can't sit there". Did students need/...

"need certainty or support? "The certainty that matters is within ourselves". The need for relative certainty was highlighted, and the usefulness of examining action stressed. How did one try to teach this kind of approach to work?

"Questions of task, of relevance and of trust were seen as significant here. Think of the problems students have 'probing with clients'. If they are treating the client like 'very brittle glass' what does it mean they feel about themselves? Is the feeling the student has of being potentially damaging to the client mirrored in what we feel for the student?" (Fieldnotes 8.11.72).

The similarity at this point in the feelings which the supervisors acknowledge as their own ultimately, and those earlier ascribed to the students are interesting. The students' sense of pressure, not yet explicitly acknowledged within the student group, is here identified and labelled "reactive depression". Interesting too that at this point within the University the tutors identified the students as "nice sharing people" who were contributing effectively in class and tutorial. The essential learning was seen by the supervisors as having two components. First the ability to function "being confident in one's uncertainty" and second the development of trust. "Trust is the key thing here, the/...

the students are still testing for us to be apparently credible".

The second half of November brought a development of this theme. This time it was how to make use of uncertainty "using it as a point for growth".

"An element of security was necessary before a student "could afford not to know". Though still perceived as "kicking and screaming, angry, pressing for answers, putting on pressure" the problem was how to use this experience as a basis for forward movement. The relationship of theory to practice was seen as helpful, even central, but avoided by the supervisors who raised it. They didn't know what theory was being taught on the Course, nor what theory they really knew themselves, it was better if the students learned experientially. "You experience something, then dig out some literature on it". "It's really changing their whole path around, working basically on self awareness making decisions on the basis of one's own experience"." (Fieldnotes 22.11.72)

This perplexity about how people learn and the ways in which they helped them to do so, was compounded by an anxiety about the role of academic teaching in social work. This tended to be seen, and was so at this stage, as a search for certainty which could not be achieved. There was a real fear of the effect of University education on/...

on the feeling component in learning. The story, already referred to elsewhere in this chapter, of "Hilary and the Groupy Group" emerged strongly here. Seen as an example of a student's exceptional capacity to relate her whole self to the learning task, and highly approved, the account supported the students' perception that Hilary was good.

"Her wholeness challenges their split" met acceptance as an interpretation amongst the group. The relationship of therapy to education and the supervisor's role here was seen as an important issue, but evaded swiftly here because "the students are giving nothing outside work in any event". "They want things to happen, they want to be taught" complained one supervisor. Instead they were experienced as depressed, unsharing, very anxious, deskilled, ambivalent and reluctant to test out. Projecting anxiety and short of a theoretical base "what" queried one supervisor "I wonder is their anxiety and what is mine?" (Fieldnotes 22.11.72)

Characteristically one group I attended was more practical in orientation than the other. Whilst also describing the students in the above terms they spent less time on the uncertainty debate. "Who has certainty anyhow, we would be doing them a disservice by giving certainty". They sought other and more immediate explanations. For example they thought that much of the students' /...

students' feelings were due to dilemmas about their trainee experiences the preceding year. The difficulty of unlearning old ways was a hard one, and "starting where the student was" involved understanding their assumptions and anger, and attempting to make use of the experience they brought. Supervising "last year's cases" posed both difficulties and opportunities: the task with those who had had student experiences last year was quite different. The central issue was the appropriate handling of the training experience. This posed problems at this stage on three main levels.

The first was the selection of suitable cases. Whilst it was necessary to be able to provide suitable work at different stages of the Course there was little consensus about what "suitable work" constituted.

"One supervisor, working in a large general hospital, used the remaining hour of the group's time to air her anger and anxiety about her own situation. She had a ward full of psychopaths, her staff kept admitting them, people whose pattern of functioning and capacity to use help was so damaged that little could be done. Idealistic students wanted to help, they couldn't in the circumstances and she came across as cynical and anti-social work. This was very hard. Other supervisors clearly thought little of her selection methods, suitable work had to be found for the students' growth/...

"growth and sense of development. Time to think
"I've so much time to think I don't know what
to do with it" and time "to feel" added to the
students' pressures just now, and to their
realisation of the responsibilities which lay
"within themselves".

The second area was that of recording. Process
recording was used by some, there was little agreement
again, and its value was disputed. The relevance of
learning to record briefly was emphasised, though this
could be difficult to achieve when also trying to teach.

The third was assessment. Seen as problematical
because experienced by the students at this stage as
"passing bad judgement" on another. This discomfort
was associated with their (the students') feelings about
"what is being done" to them. The recognition of limits
for themselves, for their clients, and for social work
created considerable inner tension as this reality was
encountered.

Early December presented a bombshell to one group.
A senior member wrote to say she could not attend for
the present, could not give the group priority, because
of commitments in the agency. This caused dismay but
a recognition if an angry one, that the purpose of the
group had not been defined, and that there were no
explicit requirements on supervisors to attend - or were
there? Direct questions which were raised were as
follows:

"Is/...

Is there a contract between course and field and what is its nature? What assumptions operate about this? What commitment do members have to the Course or to the Group? What might be the problems associated with having a specific statement about contract?

In the context of a changing course, what is the purpose of this group? How does this relate to the role of the different tutors?

If social work education is a "total teaching process" what implications does this have for a contract between course and field?

The role of the supervisor was seen as "equal and complementary to" the theoretical teaching.

" "If I hold this then I am saying something about the contract from where I stand" said one tutor. "There has to be a commitment to regular meetings". "I've felt quite a split between agency and school" a supervisor said quietly. Another said "I felt whole after our last meeting here, I went back able to use a lot we'd talked about, my student isn't an academic and neither am I, I'm terrified I might collude with her split"." (Fieldnotes 12.72)

Courses it was recognised have different values in respect of fieldwork, then what were those held by this course? What emerged as agreed values were: the integration of thinking and feeling, the critical use of the intellect, critical/...

critical evaluation of the environment, self awareness - seen as the first step in a self evaluative professional process, and the use of authority. The question once more was, is teaching from this value base deemed academic teaching? And how, if students start at the micro level, can concepts of work at macro level be added? In general the changing theoretical emphases were stressed together with again the pressure for academic respectability - clearly felt to be at variance with social work values.

"Things have dropped into place, they are writing records, it's lovely". Early December heralded a phase when the supervisors suddenly felt things were better with the students. "Happier", "doing good work", "more committed", were general observations. The tutors felt differently. "I feel infected by the students' depression" said one. "Life is a difficult struggle". And another "they are not reading anything, I have a pretty jaundiced view of them". Their commitment was seriously felt to be in question. There was a struggle to begin to understand the joint demands made on the students' time, dropped quickly because conflict was imminent: "Last year you were worried because they were reading too much!" But the difficulty of finding the 'right' thing to do on the Course was recognised. Seen as the individualising of the experience, there was recognition that rivalry and competition were rife, yet there was too an ultimate standard required. Assessment, first raised as a problem for/...

for students, was taken up by the supervisors for themselves: "are my differences from everyone else acceptable?" "How do I know and trust your judgement?" Their own sense of being exposed as worker, role model, teacher, was identified as was the stress of using authority at a time when they sensed the underlying hostility of the student group. "Do they go next door and say "that awful woman"?" There is real difficulty in identifying "success", it all may be "a con". The growing ability to see and understand more of what is happening in any situation created real stress; the important thing for a social worker to learn was how to live with that stress.

The increasing demands of the community on social work were noted. They added to the pressure but also underlined the necessity for finding new ways of helping. Social work needed to be broader in its thinking, to be more politically and structurally aware of the processes which influenced people's lives. There was a steadily developing gap between course and field, between theory and practice, which created real concern amongst supervisors.

This section highlights the particular ongoing interests of the supervisors. Of significance are their differing perceptions of the students' reaction from the students themselves, and from the tutors, and the meaning of these differences. Practitioners struggling with educational issues, they fall back constantly on therapeutic models; is their happiness at the end of term that of the practitioner when the client has defined himself as "ill" and/...

and in need of help? The complex transactional nature of the teaching task can I think begin to be glimpsed here, as the 'parcel' of discomfort and uncertainty is handed round in the management of the experience.

'Partnership' Issues - The Reality of Working Together

Further there is the important recognition of some central questions about "working together". The question of contract and of values in this regard is crucial to the development of the process, though the current organisational model did little to promote the dialogue or its furtherance. The role of the academic institution and of taught content in relation to experienced learning is obviously central, and tended to be polarised in this stage. The essential difficulties and dynamic involved in two groups attempting to work together are further well illustrated in the activities of the main supervisors' group, as it sought to find a point of contact with the policy making of the Course, the Policy and Administration Committee. In mid November, if trust and apparent credibility were problems for the students, similar concerns reared their heads for the fieldwork teachers in their relationship with the Course. A meeting of field teachers highlighted the difficulty.

"The representatives reported briefly and in a rather confused manner. It seemed that there had been four meetings of the Policy and Administration Committee. They had focused mainly on the shape of the course - when that was clear/...

"clear the fieldwork teachers would be told.
"I haven't got a clear idea yet of what it is to be, there were to be themes like 'reception into care'," said one representative. The other said "I am confused about the nature of the change". Fieldwork teachers had, however, been asked for their ideas about research projects in the field. There was a need to strengthen the teaching on research though there were problems about time and timing if a project was to be fitted in. Little information was available about current teaching or what sort of project or research, with what sort of aim might have been in the minds of the Policy and Administration Committee. The supervisors reacted initially against the suggestion "it's hard enough to teach them to be social workers". Time was against it, "what are we on about? What timing links with what on this Course? We just muddle through". Anger was expressed at the pushing of a pint into a half pint pot and the realisation dawned that to really discuss the proposal they needed to know much more about it. "It came up at the end of the meeting, we are being asked for ideas to help the staff, not being asked to do anything, just give ideas"." (Fieldnotes 15.11.72)

Seminars were needed for supervisors first rather than for students was the final comment.

Communication/...

Communication problems about interviewing for the next year's course arose next. In a somewhat surprising (to me) message the senior secretary in the Department asked for a list of those willing to participate in selection. One member reacted strongly. She knew what was involved, and had strong feelings about the levels of skill and experience required, others hadn't a clue and the matter was dropped. To "throw the thing open like this was a departure"!! (Fieldnotes 15.11.72)

Unsatisfactory as these communications were for the fieldwork teachers they were nothing to the pressures and angers experienced by the three representatives. Caught, as they experienced it, between tutors and supervisors, they felt angry, manipulated and vulnerable.

" "She launched forth on the fighting within the Department. It made it impossible to do anything really constructive. The research issue we'd just been discussing was only a sop to one member, it hadn't been properly thought out, she hadn't known what she was supposed to be saying to the supervisors. The tutors played a game with straight faces as if nothing was wrong, it was most destructive. When they didn't want to face things themselves they got rid of them by "let's ask the supervisors". Very convenient but not really very helpful to anyone"." (Fieldnotes 15.11.72)

At times they spoke as if more identified with the tutors and less as above, and a place to belong was a difficulty. For/...

For example referring to the same meeting another representative put it this way.

" "they (the other supervisors) are angry because of the extra demand. They want to be asked but when they were asked they hadn't really the desire to help - or perhaps the time and energy. They were being asked to be more responsible; they were ambivalent about that, more was being pushed on to them there was a sense of being overwhelmed"."
(Fieldnotes 22.11.72)

The third member shared these feelings more restrainedly

" "I am finding my position very difficult to work out". Here the anger was directed at the system by which the minutes were produced, and by implication the tensions in the situation which influenced this. "I'm getting angry because nothing I say is even minuted. Only what the important people say is recorded". The important people were seen as the Senior Lecturer and the perceived leaders of factions within the Department. The minutes seemed to be being used as a device to keep those people happy." (Fieldnotes 30.11.72)

Such feelings and miscommunications will be familiar to most of us, and particularly so to those who have studied the phenomena and are conversant with much of the writing on Group Theory. Perhaps, Bion³, Miller and Rice, /...

Rice,⁴ and Miller and Gwynne⁵ provide a useful starting point. Certainly central issues were becoming clear about contract, about working together, about the balance and purpose of 'the partnership' and fundamentally about the role, skills and contribution of the fieldwork teacher.

The Tutors' World

The foregoing must raise questions about what was happening here. The widening ripples of concern, and change, were seen to have their origins here. Where calm, order and certainty were hoped for, or even expected, there was pressure, anger, in-fighting and uncertainty. It was as if all the difficulties and uncertainties inherent in the social work scene were somehow personalised and acted out within the group. Certainly it took much energy to judge by the excessive pattern of meetings (there were 56 planning meetings held that first term) and the intensity of feeling expressed by individual staff members to me informally. It was harder to judge what the conflict was about, and interpretation tended to be made on a personal level.

It is useful to look first at the external reality in the search for understanding. Change as I have already indicated earlier was coming inevitably. There would be a new leader appointed within the year with all the implications that might have for an alteration in traditional thinking and ways of doing, as well as the loss of a highly valued senior colleague. A colleague who for many staff 'embodied' /...

'embodied' the ideals and values of the Course and on whom they were markedly dependent. There was present change in the additions to the staff group of three new members - although as one was well known to the existing staff - there was regular reference to the 'two' new members which together with the fact that they were "farmed out" in an attic flat across the road, served to accentuate their newness and non-belonging. Inexperienced relatively, yet intelligent and questioning, the new members had difficulty in understanding the fears of the others, as well as the established theoretical position held by the Course. With less practice experience, and believed to be less psychodynamically orientated, they were placed in a very invidious position. On the one hand carrying considerable tutorial and teaching responsibility with little support, and on the other increasingly aware of their colleagues' mistrust. Suffice it to say that their integration into the staff group did not take place with any speed or real awareness of their discomforts.

Further there was little role differentiation amongst staff. All were on the same grade, all lecturers, though experience, age and expertise varied considerably. The extent and nature of the authority of the senior lecturer was unclear, and planning usually proceeded on the basis of an attempt to achieve consensus. Appointments made on the basis of certain interests did not necessarily confirm these when work was being shared, and the authority of each staff member to act was usually seriously in question./...

question. Teaching areas had grown up in relation to individual interests when the Course was smaller, and certain 'markets' were in fact 'cornered'. In most situations everyone and to that extent no one was responsible for planning, carrying the can etc. and endless negotiation preceded most moves.

Course planning and the development of individual lecture series and classes took up a lot of energy too. I was surprised (I don't know why, what was I expecting of this group?) at the uncertainty with which some staff members discussed plans either with me, or in my hearing, and at the degree of anxiety experienced as to whether lectures had "come off" or not. I had not realised the extent to which staff were "cut off" from feedback, particularly by the large group teaching situation, and this "carrying on in the absence of knowing" seemed a particularly hard pressure.

Teaching, whether in tutorials, small groups as in social work method, or in the lecture situation was felt a pressure. Staff got support more from each other on an individual friendship basis than from the provision of any structured support within the department. For example:

" "over lunch D was reading out to Y notes on a scrappy bit of paper + they were about the case for discussion at that afternoon's class. She said it was her "homework". She added that she wasn't feeling well, she dreaded Tuesdays, she'd told me that before. "I hate social work method/...

"method and those cases. I don't think the students pick up how much I hate it; I always feel at such a loss. The difficulty is how to make things 'go' and keep them 'going', I feel so stuck, it's awful".

(Fieldnotes 14.11.72)

Several other tutors expressed at intervals reservations about their social work method groups, but for the inexperienced they proved tough going.

"I think it went better because we got away from the case", followed by pretty strong feelings about the antiquity and irrelevance of the case material itself. "I've told them (the students) they'll have to get through three this term and then we can do other things, they groaned, but we'll have to do it". (Fieldnotes 22.11.72)

Further realistic pressure lay in the direction of the links with the field and in the search for new placements as well as in the maintenance of goodwill vis a vis the existing supervisors. Time and energy are required in considerable quantity if these links are to be meaningful and continued at an administrative level with the agencies as well as at a day to day level with the supervisor concerned. The administrative links were ignored to all intents and purposes in this year, but considerable time was spent at the other level. Theoretically one member had responsibility for organising placements, but in practice almost every decision made was queried and the group/...

group did not accord her the authority necessary to carry it out, neither did the leadership support and confirm her position which consequently became intolerable.

The extent to which the Course and field were to plan jointly at any level was open to question, even if held to be a particular value of the Course. The material already documented about relationship with the field indicates something of the pressure here, as the two worlds tended to misperceive each other and to have difficulty in meeting. Joint planning at this stage anyhow was a myth, the reality that even to share practical hard information about current teaching posed major problems.

Busy, tired, stressed and often overworked it might be easy to dismiss this group as just incompetent teachers. Yet faced with the very complex business of teaching social work in a rapidly changing situation it is difficult to know what to expect. In stressing the reality of external pressures I would not want to convey that there were no positives. There were, and these lay in the competence and experience within the group, in the enjoyment which most staff obtained in sharing learning with students, particularly individually, and in the awareness of the nature of the process in which they were involved. The energy and care which this group too poured into the task was extremely impressive.

Staff Perception of Difficulties

The level of care, of involvement, had its difficulties too./...

too. The staff throughout the term would rarely have expressed their feeling of pressure and stress in the terms I have chosen so far. They expressed them in highly personalised terms, seeing the difficulties not as the consequence of a series of interacting forces but as the difficulty of one or two people. In the search for stability, for a regularising of the system, the characteristic defences identified by Miller and Gwynne in "A Life Apart", were very evident.⁶ Under leadership of a consensus/dependency type the group split and constantly polarised. Those favouring structure under one leader, the instrumental leader, classified by the others as 'rigid', and those apparently on a more expressive experiential tack under another. In fact there were striking similarities about the characteristics of both 'leaders' and both represented a search for certainty in an uncertain world. The 'rigid' leader was scapegoated continually by the group. Feelings ran very high and though beliefs about large differences in values and perspectives were held by the various protagonists it was difficult listening to lectures for example to identify many major differences of emphasis. The normal defenses were splitting and projection and the whole experienced as destructive of individual potential and creativity.

Life then was not an easy business for the management, and if the students were tired and depressed at the end of the term then their feelings were mirrored in no small degree by those within the staff group.

World/...

Worlds Apart, the first phase in the professional educational programme for this group of social work students, was then an energetic painful one for all concerned. The high emotional content coupled with the very considerable intellectual and physical demands created uncertainty and inevitable anxiety. Usually it is the students' anxiety which is the focus. What this material demonstrates is the pressure inherent in the venture for all concerned, the complex nature of the course/field teaching task and the transactional nature of the way in which it was managed. Questions of role, skill and boundary are evident for all; perhaps the complex unravelling of which feelings belong to whom will become clearer as the process unfolds.

Worlds Apart - The First Term

Student

Learning

Exploratory, Anxious Dependent

Phase

Course

Framework

Students

Field
teachers

High Change Expectations All Groups

Tutors

Tasks

Students

Role Change - Establishing or maintaining
friendship/supportive networks

Initiating and Developing contacts with
tutors and fieldteachers.

Orientation to Agency

Exploring, identifying and managing initial
perceptions of authority

Development of a new sensitivity to the
relationship of the public to the private
self, and a beginning redrawing of
boundaries

Field
teachers

Accepting own authority and student depend-
ency.

Management of anxiety associated with
dependency/...

dependency.

Initiating relationship of trust with student/s.

Identifying relevant programme of work, evaluating same, and deciding standards

Maintaining contact with Course staff, content and progress

Tutors

Management of leadership change

Integration of new staff members

Course and individual lecture planning and teaching

Initiating relationship of trust with students.

Maintenance of relationships with the field

Communication

Defensive, Distorted, Irritated,

Mode

Depressed

CHAPTER VII

Chapter VII - "Worlds in Conflict"

"I'm getting my bullet proof vest ready for this afternoon". (Tutor, prior to Course Review 21.2.73)

Change, conflict and confrontation characterised this phase of the Course. It was a time for the open expression of angry feelings both within and between the three groups of participants, or protagonists as they felt themselves to be at this stage. Each, concerned with their own tasks and pressures, tended to misperceive the other and the distortions which occurred were considerable. It is important, therefore, to examine first the structure of the term and to identify some of the causes of the experienced pressure.

Structural Change

Change was first expected in the organisation of the teaching term. In mid-February two basic changes were planned. The curriculum was altered, certain courses such as Human Growth and Behaviour ended, and others began, and there was increased emphasis on seminar type teaching and student participation in choice of topics. Secondly it was the time when first placements ended and there was a general post. Readers will remember that the Course provided for two placements in different settings and that the second was normally completed in the area of primary interest to the student, usually the area of ultimate work choice. Therefore on a stated day in mid-February these changes were implemented, the normal expectations and demands of this exercise requiring a series of complex organisational/...

organisational processes as well as a series of individual change responses from tutors, fieldwork teachers and students alike. Decisions had to be taken at a range of levels about the organisation of the second half of the teaching programme, about Course content, about teaching methods, about the allocation of new placements and the criteria to be employed in this, and action taken to convey these decisions to students and field teachers. The work of consultation with fieldteachers about the availability of placements, their interests and the opportunities to be offered is crucial to the enterprise. For students choices have to be made about next placements but with what freedom and on what criteria? Evaluation is meaningful for all groups at some level, and guided choice on the basis of interest and "learning needs" can prove a problematic area. For all there was a change in key working relationships: students must relinquish relationships with supervisors which had often assumed a real significance, and establish new ones; fieldteachers faced a similar exchange, while tutors must begin to work with a fresh group of supervisors. In the "general post" of normal practice it is perhaps not surprising that feelings ran high and there was a sense of pressure.

Given these changes the "day to day" world proceeded much as before, the pattern of lectures, field days and tutorials unchanged. The administrative work of the Course and the regular meetings between tutors and supervisors continued in normal pattern, both in terms of the/...

the number and kind of meetings and in the dynamics of the exchange - the characteristic difficulties in communication and understanding tended to continue with increasing familiarity. It became clear, too, that there were issues of import on two quite separate levels; that of the more long term organisational working together between Course and field, a happening on quite a different time scale to that of the joint teaching task. And secondly, the level of the teaching task which is more directly related to the ongoing demand and thrust of the student group and to the current pattern of Course teaching.

Whilst outlining and drawing attention to the repetitious nature of the difficulties in ongoing communication I do not plan to expand them further, but rather to focus down on those issues which seemed central to the phase and which, in fact, related directly to my main interest, namely the activities, role and relationship to the Course of the fieldwork teacher. Set, therefore, in the context of the ongoing preoccupations of the three worlds I plan to develop the material in three key areas. Firstly on issues about 'good' and 'bad' supervision in the field, secondly on the development of a group identity among the students as a basis for conflict and negotiation, and thirdly on the organisational issues crystallised in the management of the placement changeover, generally 'explained' in terms of personal relationships and issues of mutual trust.

Personalisation of Issues

Indeed/...

Indeed the 'personalisation' of difficulties at all levels in this period is striking and raises a number of questions. Did the teaching central to Human Growth and Behaviour, and supported by much else taught, contribute to this orientation? Was it a reflection of a staff belief system? Did the maturational interests of the students in particular predispose them to identify difficulties in this way? Perhaps Richard Jones¹ work is relevant here when he expands understanding of Erikson's stages of development to illumine teaching implications for each age group. Preoccupation with intimacy and relationship is a natural focus for interest in early adult life. Or does it relate to a lack of discrimination about role and function, the consequence of an extension of thinking derived from client orientated field experience. Tropp² writes:

"Before there was social work education, there was social work, and, in the beginning, the basic relation unit in this system was that of worker to client. This was soon superseded in pre-eminence by the supervisor-worker relationship, which, under the overwhelming (and still predominant) influence of the psychoanalytic system of thought, became, in conjunction with the worker-client drama, a kind of play-within-a-play. The message of that medium was "what we do here in supervisory conference is not so different from what you do with your client". This mode was very/...

"very easily transferred to the field instructor - student relationship, which appeared to be simply a training version of the same model. From that point, the conversion of social work practitioners into classroom teachers needed the one final link - the student in the class setting. After all, the student needed help, and the teacher was the helping agent and all helping was apparently the same, so it became a play-within-a-play-within-a-play, and the student became the blurred image of the archetypal client".

He suggests that the current preoccupation with sensitivity-training, and resistance to professional role, is a sign of a widespread malaise, and the social work student may be looking to this profession, and to his education for it, for those qualities which cannot be found in the world of large, impersonal organisational structures namely "the freshness, intimacy, genuineness and vitality in which they find that world so woefully deficient"³.

Certainly much that I heard was conveyed, and wants and explanations described in relationship and problem orientated terms, familiar in the context of the learned work in class and field. There was too, among students particularly, a sense of a search for mystery. It is difficult to describe this impression though it was vivid, but the attraction of the emphasis on self awareness and on group dynamics was manifestly great. The theory of group dynamics created intense interest and had high status/...

status - though held at the low status time of 9:30 a.m. on Wednesdays almost the whole class turned out to hear. It seems that Hudson is right, power certainly does seem to inhere in some curious way in the vaguer and less explicit ideas.

The Stressful Nature of the Research Process

The research task too at this point proved both extremely complex and very stressful. I have already indicated that the research methods used were intended to enhance 'day to day' understanding of the complexity of situations. I therefore tried to remain open as tension built up, and worked to maintain and develop relationships with all three groups to increase my understanding of the planned as well as the unexpected aspects of the process. There was a 'boom' in the amount of data available to me as relationships and trust developed. There was too some opportunity for public crosschecking of my perceptions as students and fieldwork teachers met together as individual groups, and later together with staff in a planned Course Review. I gained access to the Policy and Administration Committee of the Department which added a further dimension to my thinking. This phase accentuated the difficulty of my role as researcher in moving between groups, between three often conflicting perceptions of current reality, at a time when feeling was running high. Only once did I completely "loose the place" and it is as well to be honest about it. I found a day which involved me in the thinking and feelings of both staff and students tiring but possible;/...

possible; a day which closely involved me with staff, students and fieldwork teachers very tiring indeed at this stage. It was on such a day that coming into class I found I was expected to participate in a roleplay. "If you come to my class then you must participate as a member". Unfortunately the roles already doled out and waiting on individual seats cast me as an Area Team Leader, a key role for the exercise, and one I rightly divined staff did not wish me to undertake. "Swap with a trainee" - easier said than done but eventually achieved - at the end of the hour I realised I had lost my papers, my handbag and for a few minutes my wits as I panicked. In pointing up the identity problems inherent in this venture with its "cross boundary ticket" I am wanting to stress too the corresponding temptation to belong somewhere within the situation and consequently to overidentify. Where this happened it was with the student world and, usually at a feeling level, I was aware of what was happening. Again only once did I experience myself as torn and the possessor of 'hot' information which others really wanted, and that was "next placement" information. I felt ashamed that I felt this a conflict and it underlined for me the extent to which I cared as a person by then about the particular futures of students I knew well. It underlined again for me the delicacy and need for 'calibration' in the maintenance of my role in the situation.

Turning now more directly to the work of the Course the same manner of presenting the material is followed as before/...

before but with more detailed focus in the areas already indicated. Change is the central theme, managing it the essential activity for all involved.

Course Input

As before the formal programme is appended within the Department's paper submitted to the C.C.E.T.S.W. The subjects taught in the first half of the term were extensions of those already described within the previous term. In mid-February the pattern was altered to include the research element in practice, residential work and community work within Principles and Practice I while Principles and Practice II focused on differential diagnosis and the choice of casework method. In this series a number of key situations were examined taking into account personality and the impact of socio-cultural and socio-economic factors on the client's functioning. Particular attention was paid to work with families and to 'enforced' relationships within a generic context.⁴

Applied Social Administration developed a study of variations in performance of social work departments related to their interpretation of broad or permissive clauses in social work legislation and the resulting policies⁵. Social Work Method groups continued to study practice issues in a variety of patterns, and the seminar programme was developed to meet student interests and particular gaps in the teaching programme.

It is, however, to the more dynamic unfolding aspects of the curriculum to which I plan to continue to refer, with/...

with special reference to that which caused public comment or heightened interest in the term. As before Human Growth and Behaviour continued to hold pride of place.

It continued until mid-February, and the content provided for a further lecture on Object Relations Theory, followed by a focus on the relationship patterns within families and the intergenerational tasks associated with the life cycle. School, adolescence and adulthood with particular reference to Erikson's stages of development; homosexuality and concepts of maturity, parenthood, love and work, aging and death were examined in turn for the normal expectations and "good enough" adjustments integral to daily living. Student responses to the series continued to be mixed; seen by some as irrelevant and confusingly presented, others found it immensely useful if at times frightening.

"there's a lot of pressure in the material in Human Growth and Behaviour. You feel anxious, it's the sudden way it hits you. It's unexpected you don't know what you've worked through yourself".

(Student at coffee, fieldnotes 21.2.73)

The social work method groups continued to meet but public conversation about them was almost nil. They had generally become important places in that they provided a small increasingly well known reference group within the Course where relaxed discussion and frankness was possible. Students had begun to know each other better, there was easier sharing and freer expression of feeling. The one I attended was reckoned by the group to be:

"very/...

"very useful, almost the most useful class I'd say". (Student group at tea, fieldnotes 21.2.73)

Principles and Practice continued with a series on groups followed by research in social work. Group work as I have already indicated had a mysterious appeal and the numbers attending rose. There were four sessions offered only, providing an introduction to group theory.. In view of the interest the sequence aroused I have recorded in some detail. First the emphasis was placed on the social worker's practice stance,

"people go to people for help not to an agency"

(Class 10.1.73)

the necessity for assessment of individual need as the basis for a choice of treatment method, and the characteristics of large and small groups. This public acknowledgment of the stress of a large group situation met with a feeling response from the class, it was a real relief to have the dynamic identified. Second, theoretical frames were identified and special attention paid to the work of Bion. Concepts of dependency, valency, projection and introjection were briefly explored. Ideas of task and leadership were central to the discussion. Student response was intrigued as well as questioning.

"She needed to know more about groups. Before coming here she'd worked in a special school in London, for ordinary children who were physically delicate. There had been a lot of pressure to run groups, she had resisted this. 'I used every/...

"every defence in the book'. She felt she'd not known enough and might have got into difficulties. She commented on her own increasing self awareness, "I feel very uncomfortable with myself just now, does this get any better?" She supposed she wouldn't have come on the Course if she hadn't felt this kind of need but it was difficult". (Coffee, fieldnotes 10.1.73)

and another example:

"I walked to coffee with Lynn - she was very preoccupied by what had been said about group process and valency. She thought her's was towards fight. She was trying to work this out and think how she really performed in a group. She thought she might risk the Group Experience, "I feel a bit apprehensive about that". There was a sense of general excitement about the series". (Fieldnotes 17.1.73)

At the forefront of the class thinking was the difficulty for them of whether or not to participate in the sequence, and for the tutor there was a dilemma about how to teach about groups in a didactic fashion. In the third lecture the question of a didactic versus an interactive approach was made explicit and the class responded with questions about the previous week's material,

"you took us too far last week, it was the wrong time, we weren't ready".

They were perplexed about the idea of group fantasy, unconscious/...

unconscious phantasy, introjection and projection. A student who had never spoken in class before said,

" 'I'm finding it hard to speak and feeling panic. My hands are clammy and my heart is thumping - but I've spoken'. What is this fear about? Is it that the class will laugh? That there are still a lot of people here I don't know? A fear of the irrelevance of the question" That I may waste their time?"

Tutor - "Is it not about self? Doing something to your image of yourself. Experiencing yourself in the group". (Class, fieldnotes 23.1.73)

This risk of the affirmation or destruction of the self in the large group situation was the focus of the whole hour's discussion, a freer one than I'd ever heard in class. No notes were taken, all round me note pads were headed 'Groups' and the tutor's name - nothing more, though involvement had been at a very high pitch.

• Stress was evident too for the tutor-concerned.

"Afterwards I was appealed to "what had happened?

I'm panicky I need some help". She went on that

she knew now why large group experiences had two

staff members; she had looked to me again and

again for some help and would have liked to

involve me, but hadn't felt able to. What

should she do next? Give a lecture on large

group dynamics, or help them conceptualise what had

happened this a.m.?" (Tutor's office fieldnotes

24.1.73)

In/...

In the event a choice was offered, a continuation of the morning's talking or a lecture? One member chose a lecture, this started and then

"we realised it was the wrong thing. The class was seething. Bill interrupted and said you didn't really know how to get consensus in a group like this, and that would have been interesting. The only way she got things going was by making people aggressive, that was what she'd done. They'd wanted to talk as a group and she'd talked; then they knew what they wanted, they'd known her talking wasn't right. At least something was happening though, people really felt something, and some who'd never spoken had, that was good".

(Student account, my flat, fieldnotes 29.1.73)

Interestingly the tutor's account tallied:

"I offered them a choice and they chose a lecture. Then they were very angry. I felt destroyed by it, it was terrible. I had to leave before it was finished, I don't really know what happened".

(Informal account, my flat 26.1.73)

This sequence then was experienced as disturbing by many students, yet exciting, a happening. The subsequent enrolment of all the students except one in the Group Experience⁶ confirmed the interest and preoccupation with self and group, though the theoretical input seemed generally to be sacrificed to a not very clearly understood experiential happening. Signing up for this, students evinced/...

evinced interest and apprehension.

"I think I really need to be converted". (Student signing in library, fieldnotes 30.2.73)

It seemed to me that there were important considerations here about the 'how' of group work. Where students experienced the 'happening' positively it might be that their capacity to practice in group settings was enhanced. Yet for those who felt very disturbed and uncertain about what was going on - would it increase the sense of not knowing, of helplessness in the practice situation?

Issues in Teaching

Methods of teaching too seemed an important issue. This term saw an increase in ways of involving the class in role play, in team exercises, and in large group discussion. There was some overall improvement in participation though it remained a difficulty. Handling student case examples and difficulties in the large group did not seem effective or satisfactory to anyone. It was noticeable too that the focus of participation had altered. No longer 'mystified victims of the system' the questions in class reflected preoccupation with the how of doing, with possible action and with the role of the professional. Value too was given to those lectures which emphasised content rather than experience. Differential diagnosis and the Choice of Social Work Method, Research and sections of Applied Social Administration. Problems of choice and quantity of content were paramount for all staff and difficult indeed. I found lectures unsatisfactory as a basis/...

basis for practice in those areas with which I was fairly unfamiliar, such as foster care. The "skim through" was frightening yet more precious time was not available. The issues together with reference to my response are usefully outlined in a paper by John Triseliotis 'Issues in Child Care Practice',⁷ which considers the generic/specialist debate with reference to education in the child care sphere.

Given there was much discussion and discontent about the lectures by both teacher and taught, it is interesting to note what the students were looking for. A review session held by a group of eight students with their tutor put common concerns like this.

"The lectures are too long. Half hour input sessions plus discussion in small groups would be generally more useful".

"The content isn't worth the time - too much spent on attitudes and experiences and individual staff presentations, not usually worth the sit".

"In general the presentation of material is poor lectures should be more 'punchy' ".

"The attempt to involve the large group in discussion was almost hopeless, straight information would be more helpful".

They indicated that they particularly valued:

"well organised material"

"not too long winded presentation"

"consistent/...

"consistent thinking"

"clarity about the issues to be raised"

"some flexible opportunities for discussion"

(Tutor's room fieldnotes 16.1.73)

I think that this material demonstrates something of the complexity of the teaching task in the classroom. Some material lends itself more easily than others to presentation in lecture situations. The conceptual thinking part of social work education must have an important place in the programme. Straight cognitive learning is essential if students are to be well grounded. Yet the affective and integrative aspects of the learning process are also vital but within this large group less easily provided in an effective way. Social work practice requires a mesh of thinking and feeling in exploration, assessment and interaction. Clearly a balance is necessary. Perhaps this can be held more easily within a total staff group as individual members demonstrate their separate values and personal priorities in social work? Those whose value is placed primarily on issues of content and clarity of thought being constructively balanced by the more experientially orientated so long as content and focus do not become obscured. The students' evident preoccupation with the more mysterious 'happening' element needs to be 'held' in the context of the total Course value system. Otherwise the messages can become rather distorted - a version of the polarised positions believed to be held within the staff group under pressure.

Both/...

Both Charlotte Towle⁸ and Helen Perlman⁹ have written helpfully about issues in class room teaching. The planning and presentation of material within the classroom is an area where social work and education can helpfully learn from each other and where much work remains to be done. Professional education, relying as it often does on practitioners turned teachers, can usefully examine its practice and develop more skilled help for new teachers. Organisational issues are important too. Certainly in this situation the absence of an overall plan for the year available to the students for study in advance led to unnecessary confusion and anger amongst students. Late planning and poor organisation of basics like time tables led to a constant sense of being on a Mystery Coach Tour, and lack of awareness of what was coming next within the programme made appreciation of it as a balanced whole much more difficult.

The Students' World

In returning to the students' world the reference is again to their public work as evidenced by general conversation within the two days each week which were spent as a group at the University. The thematic concerns were increasingly easily identifiable as my familiarity with the situation grew, and in this term were open to public crosschecking as general group concerns within student meetings and staff/student reviews. My previous perception that public preoccupations were not secret to the student group but provided a basis for later sharing/...

sharing was confirmed. Secrets were not maintained though the timing of sharing was important. As before I plan to outline the main stages of this student work as the group sought to manage themselves in relation to Course content, expectations and placement experience.

Depression - A Legitimate Experience

The beginning of the term in early January saw a return to the old theme of depression. Now it seemed an acceptable word, and to be or to have been depressed a legitimate experience. Initial contacts underlined the position.

"Eleanor greeted me warmly. She said spontaneously that she'd been in bed for four days after she'd last seen me at the end of term. She'd felt terrible but had decided to stagger home. "I had a black depression after that". She laughed. "It was terrible, I just didn't want to see anyone and felt awful. I just saw close family the whole time except for the last three days, then I began to feel like seeing people. It's hard to imagine I did so little in a fortnight, but there it is, I feel ready to go now, some are only getting over flu".
(Outside class, fieldnotes 9.1.73)

The combination of stress created by the Course with a family holiday presented pressure for some:

"Barbara said she hadn't been ill, she just hadn't realised how tired she'd been until she got home.

"I/...

"I was exhausted. I never had such a quiet holiday". It was the first time she hadn't felt like visiting her friends or relations - "I only felt like it right at the end". She added "it was very hard at home. I didn't know what to tell them about what I was doing". She found herself looking at them in a different light, she'd made her mother quite anxious by asking questions about her own early experiences. She'd felt bad but didn't tell them much, how could they understand?"

(Coffee queue, fieldnotes 10.1.73)

A sense of pressure in placements, of the second term starting already, of needing to know how they were getting on, seemed to characterise most of the discussion at this stage. It seemed that the feelings of depression and uncertainty were related to assessment both by self and staff and where these issues were uncertain stress was experienced.

"At tea with Lynn, Joyce, Pip and John, Lynn said she'd felt awful going off before Christmas, not knowing where she was in her placement, nor what the supervisor thought. She'd worried a lot about this. Since coming back he'd suggested an assessment, they'd both contributed to it, now she knew where she was it felt better. The others were surprised, nothing like that had happened to them. Joyce thought she knew what hers thought, "you/...

"you get hints, little ways of telling you".

Pip exploded "that was one thing her supervisor couldn't do was an assessment, she didn't know anything about her, she probably didn't even know how many cases she held, how could she the way she carried on".

(Canteen, fieldnotes 9.1.73)

Care was taken to differentiate between the placement and the supervisor. One could be 'good' and the other 'bad', though it was difficult to understand the basis for the judgement at this stage. Supervisors were widely discussed and known to be 'good' or 'bad'. Students were quite clear whether they were 'happy' or 'unhappy' and this knowledge and understanding was widely and publicly shared. Happiness or otherwise was not always related to perceptions of 'goodness' or 'badness' in the supervisor; it was possible to be 'unhappy' for a period or for some specific reason with a 'good' supervisor. Nevertheless this assessment for themselves of their position took a lot of time and energy and was presumably related to the mid year Course assessment, to the task of ending the placement, and to the business of participating in the choice of another. Altogether a risky business as the variations in experience seemed considerable. Uncertain about assessment and feeling generally pressured with little reading time, there emerged a sense of being 'overwhelmed' and of anger. At first described as something they'd felt before Christmas but hadn't expressed, it was not yet quite legitimate/...

legitimate to be publicly angry. The fact that one student chose to leave the Course at this point highlighted the anxiety of the others, some of whom acknowledged they'd like to do the same.

"I wish I had X's courage. I'm completely fed up, I've learned nothing, I'm at a dead stop, I feel immobilised".

(Back of class, fieldnotes 24.1.73)

'Good' and 'Bad' Supervisors

The issue of 'good' and 'bad' supervision was a paramount student concern at this stage. Much time and energy was spent on it and a definition of one's present position represented part of the work of preparing for change. As a phenomenon it warrants attention if only because the definitions created by the students tell something of the valued components at this early stage of the Course. In exploring this issue I am drawing both on public conversation and on the help of two separate friendship networks who met with me voluntarily in the evening to explore their own experiences and definitions.

What were deemed to be the constituents of the 'good' experience?

" "Placements make or break the Course". They all hoped there would be more pressure to learn there next time. They hoped the next supervisor would be more direct, "somebody to get me down to it". They didn't think there were many like that, there seemed to be a wide variation, did they (the supervisors)/...

"supervisors) get any help with their teaching"?"

(Canteen, fieldnotes 12.2.73)

Students tended to couch their views in fairly similar terms when it came to 'good' supervision, the thing they were looking for.

" "a basic honesty, "trust", these were the important things. A lot depended on how you got started, the actual communication. The supervisor needed to be able to set up "a communication platform"."

(Friends talking, my flat 29.2.73)

and another view, rather similar and put forcefully:

"Judith said "what I want is a positive relationship where I can feel someone has a real interest in me". She went on to say she'd had little previous experience and felt she needed structure and clear teaching but above all "I want a relationship in which I am considered and cared about in a real way. I want frankness about what I am doing, I want this with my tutor as well". She described the good experience she'd had "this sense of real care and of working together is what I value, the most important thing".

"All the people who are unhappy in their placements seem to complain about this, the relationship with the supervisor being superficial/...

"superficial, their supervisor hadn't bothered".

(Friends talking, my flat 12.2.73)

The classic stereotype of the good supervisor at this stage was of one who cared, enabled communication, was frank and open so that the student knew where he or she was. Further this care was demonstrated in defined ways. The timing of supervision sessions was regular and the amount of time for general discussion adequate. Two-three hours a week was acceptable, one was not. This supervisor required process recording and prepared adequately for the supervision session. Work was explored in depth and time not wasted because the supervisor hadn't read the material. Assessment was regular and shared. Deviations from the norm were acceptable only if the relationship element felt satisfactory and compensated for the loss.

And loss it was felt keenly to be, and the mixture of offerings to constitute some unfairness.

"Joy said she hadn't had regular supervision.

She got lots of time but not on a regular basis.

She didn't really have to do process - her

supervisor spent so much time talking about

herself that it wasn't always very useful.

Mary said she mostly got time but "had to fight

for it". She described a busy office where there really wasn't time for her, "I had to nag and nag".

She reckoned when she got it it was probably o.k., the supervisor wasn't very forthcoming".

(Friends talking, my flat, 12.2.73)

The/...

The 'bad' supervisor classically fell down in those fundamental areas. Time, focus on the student's needs, lack of written requirements, lack of preparation for sessions and of exchange about progress were the targets of greatest concern. Fundamentally a mixture of some or all of these constituents was felt to indicate a lack of care, a lack of the fundamental quality expected and desired, the relationship of trust and care as a basis for learning. Behaviour too on the part of the supervisor which was not understood was experienced as lack of care. For example:

"We haven't got to know our supervisor at all. It's a strange relationship, very superficial. She doesn't seem to have time for us. She even walks to lunch with us down the same corridor and then sits at another table. We don't understand it. We feel upset and angry".

(Coffee queue, fieldnotes 7.2.73)

The nature of the interaction and the extent to which the student could influence it were an increasing source of interest. First questions in this area were about the extent to which it was like a worker/client situation.

" "I mean is that what its meant to be like" asked Jean. The others thought there were similiarities but it was different".

Difference lay in the greater equality of the relationship, "its a more equal sharing relationship" a two-way thing. Most of those who described their experiences as positive included/...

included as evidence some difficulty or personal problem on which they and the supervisor had worked, usually with pain, but to good purpose and greater mutual understanding. Thus they indicated the relationship was more equal, they both had a role and mutually understood it.

There was, however, one area where the client/worker aspect of the relationship was felt most keenly to be present. This was in the strength of the emotion which the relationship could create, and to have positive feelings of real strength in this context was perplexing and not often acknowledged publicly. This account was given in a gathering of close friends when more intimate acknowledgement of feeling was acceptable and shared.

"Jean said hesitantly it was a very emotional relationship. Her supervisor is a man, very dishy, good looking, better than her husband. He dresses well, she finds him very attractive, its a man and a woman working together after all. At first I felt "Oh God my marriage". It is a very close relationship on a very narrow front, it arouses all sorts of feelings she stopped "it's queer, I couldn't even hold a conversation with him at first, when I met him outside the office I couldn't think of a thing to say. One day at Christmas I met him and managed an ordinary conversation, what a relief. Now it's a more reciprocal relationship "It's funny, in a way I am very/...

"very jealous when it comes to him, jealous of the other people he sees. It's difficult to put this, but that's how it is, yes it's jealousy really"." (29.1.73)

Perhaps it is not surprising that the female/female counterpart of this conversation is missing. That the supervisory relationship stirred strong often adolescent feelings was tacitly acknowledged but never really discussed in the positive. Negative aspects received much attention, the strength of the feeling more evident in the frequency of the accounts and the extent to which they were 'heard' than in the actual content. An example:

"Sara said "Mine is older, a woman who has a daughter exactly my age. She doesn't seem in touch it raises very fundamental emotions she thought the supervisor had difficulty in distinguishing her from her daughter. "Also she's never done any sociology and doesn't know anything about it". This makes it hard to look at things together "we talk but we don't

communicate"." (Friends talking, my flat 29.1.73)

and another:

"Tess said her experience was different and mostly negative. She expresses anxiety too quickly and has triggered anxiety in her supervisor", the thing has spiralled off". Things get blown up out of proportion the supervisor is too protective, anxious/...

"anxious about how they behaved with other staff, "it sets you back"!"

(Friends talking, my flat 12.2.73)

The relationship of these feelings to the actual work of the placement came next, surprisingly far down the list of student preoccupations in discussion when by implication it was included in the stereotype as good i.e. in terms of supervision, focus on process etc. The availability or otherwise of work was crucial to the enterprise. An experience usually described as 'good' because of the quality of relationship and communication with the supervisor was stressful because

" "I only met one client before Christmas, there was no suitable work". "I was dreadfully anxious" though this was followed by perceptive analysis of the unit situation which contributed to the reality".

(Friends talking, my flat 29.1.73)

Similarly one described as generally 'bad' was improved by good client contact:

"this term we've had some good cases, this made a big difference. Last term they'd been pretty unhappy. The beginning had been awful, they were supposed to "get the feel of the place", they waited and waited for cases "our anxiety mounted and mounted"."

(Friends talking, my flat 12.2.73)

In/...

In other words whilst discussion was dominated by feelings about the 'goodness' and 'badness' of the situation in terms of the supervisor as a caring person, the idea of work and task was central to the concept. Where there was clarity and agreement about 'the work' then the situation was normally deemed good or at least to be improving. Where work was unclear or misunderstood, the focus of the students' concern became the supervisory relationship - therefore where there was distortion within that the arena was all prepared for anxiety and undue distress.

There is another interesting aspect to this idea of the 'good' experience. I noticed that where the student defined the situation as 'good' there was a good fit in perspective between her/him and the supervisor. They shared a similar view of the reality of the placement. A good example is of the student already quoted who only saw one client before Christmas. Her vivid description and analysis of the agency situation coincided almost exactly with that of her supervisor whom I heard describe it in a supervisors' meeting subsequently. The converse tended to be true for the 'bad' experiences. Listening to both parties talk their realities were very different and there was clear misunderstanding.

The basis for this misunderstanding derived from several different aspects of the relationship. Expectation of its nature differed, for example in the matter of/...

of sharing personal information, in the undertaking of the task of the placement, in criticism experienced as unfair. Tension between University and field expectations could contribute such as in the matter of extra placement days and in apparent unawareness between supervisors of 'usual' methods of supervising. Misunderstanding too of the functions and normal daily operating of the agency could contribute. More difficult were those misperceptions which had their roots in the internal worlds of either student or supervisor: inappropriate projections, transference and counter transference elements usually seen as the difficulty of the student. This was described by a student:

"She felt that some of the things that troubled her were to do with her, but some were realistically to do with the Course. Everything was seen as being inside the student, everything was turned back on you, then things went flat, there was no outlet, things got out of perspective".

(Friends talking, my flat, 12.2.73)

I think too that there could be quite different perceptions of the task of learning to become a social worker. Supervisors' aims, values, and styles of supervision are pertinent here; some more easily led to confusion than others. I plan to expand this area in a subsequent chapter. There was no evidence that mutual perceptions of/...

of reality were collusive in an unhelpful sense, though I recognise that this could be a difficulty. Rather the students' perception of 'badness' in the relationship was confirmed by the distortion which occurred.

It is perhaps important too that at this point there was preoccupation with the links between tutor and supervisor, together with exploration of their respective roles. Theory was experienced as being apart, not relevant fully to application.

"Little is taught about application". (12.2.73)
but also there was an out of touchness with the Course that was perplexing.

"the supervision seems to be so out of touch with the Course. I don't think mine knows much about for example Object Relations. I don't think she has a clue about what goes on on the Course - so what you are doing isn't taught about in the same language or ideas - that's a real difficulty many of us are finding".
(Friends talking, my flat 29.1.73)

Similarly tutors had little current experience of practice and "lived in an ivory tower" and were "out of touch". They needed a "good push" out into the field. Differentiation of role was beginning to be explored.

"I use my tutor and supervisor for different purposes. I experimented a bit. My tutor is not very good at the day to day management of/...

"of cases, she's very unrealistic. My supervisor is not good theoretically but I get a lot from both in their own ways".

(Friends talking, my flat 12.2.73)

These views and feelings about the central expectations and difficulties in supervision were mirrored widely in the whole Course. They were raised in open meetings with other students and with staff. They are particularly interesting in the extent to which they mirror the concerns of other students such as those studied by Herand¹⁰ in their concern with the primacy of the supervisory relationship itself in the learning experience.

Anger - Springboard to Group Cohesion

To return again to the ongoing work of the student group. The sense of depression and uncertainty was particularly strong towards the end of January. The Group lectures had highlighted aspects of the functioning of the total student group, they lacked still a corporate sense of identity and felt powerless. It was general to speak of feeling 'overwhelmed' - by the pressure of ending placements and the recording involved, by leaving clients and feeling bad about this, by theory which still did not seem to link with practice.

"At tea with Sheelagh, and Linda, Sheelagh said she was feeling wretched. She had a streaming cold, but couldn't let people down by not coming in, it was so near the end and she had people she must/...

"must see. She felt overwhelmed, but must struggle on it was still difficult even to talk in class, those group lectures really had highlighted the people who didn't talk and who you didn't know, a lot of people really".

(Canteen, 30.1.73)

It was a difficult week to be around. Anxiety was evident yet students seemed withdrawn, preoccupied with their own individual concerns, and talking about the far distant future in public. Plans for work after finishing the Course were aired, ways of avoiding the treadmill of conventional social work, and little was said about the present. Yet I felt in "anxiety avenue" somehow acutely aware of a sense of pressure and tension which was not made explicit.

Suddenly the following week anger was the key word. Describing themselves as exhausted in the main pressed by the demands of ending placements "supposed to be mourning", and anxious about the decisions which might be taken about the next one. Anger came to the surface.

"Bumped into Sara and Lynn beautifying in the cloakroom. "We're feeling really angry - the group is less depressed now, two weeks ago it was awful and Christmas was bad"."

(Cloakroom 7.2.73)

What the anger was about was less clear. It took many forms/...

forms and had several names' and as an acknowledged feeling it was widely talked about.

"I'd like to talk some more to you but I'm not sure this is a good time. I'm feeling very angry, it's just coming through, the pressure is almost impossible".

(Student in corridor 7.2.73)

Realistically as I indicated earlier the pressure was fairly great. Placement changeover was imminent the students did not know where they would be going next, nor really on what basis the decision would be made. Ideas about what they wanted together with what the tutor thought they 'needed', plus the grapevine preoccupation with 'good' and 'bad' placements complicated the issue. 'Matching' was a concept aired but not particularly believed in, and there were apparent variations in the ways tutors had handled the issue of the next placement with students. Given the central nature of the field experience to the Course this concern is not surprising. Add to this mixture the uncertainty felt by many about formal assessment (interestingly less shared by those who had had interim assessments which had laid a basis for this one) and the sense of not being able to win, of everything being interpreted and you have a mix of reality and fantasy which is formidable.

The pressure of leaving, laughed about as mourning, was nevertheless real and spoken about in terms of client need./...

need. The care and sensitivity with which students described to each other clients they were leaving, and sometimes felt to be abandoning, was impressive but painful to hear. Relinquishing placement and supervisor whether 'good' or 'bad' was made more difficult by 'not knowing' where they were moving to. Altogether a vulnerable and perplexing time.

Here a combination of events made possible some public crosschecking of my perceptions. A request from the C.C.E.T.S.W. to meet the students, coincided with a staff decision to hold a Course Review. Normally such reviews were held termly but for particular reasons this had not happened this year. Reckoned by the staff "to be usually the time for anger" the students were told of the possibility. The combination of group feeling and external demand provided a springboard for a student meeting attended by 40 out of 49 students - the first of its kind, surprising them by their participation, sense of solidarity and of purpose. My notes detail an angry meeting:

"Angry and dissatisfied, torn between a need to uphold the Course in public, and the current desire for confrontation, they prepared a set of complaints for the review. Feeling focused on the narrowness of the Course prospectus - "it's all casework, casework and more casework" and on the absence of adequate teaching about community/...

"community, on the psychodynamic orientation of much of the teaching, and on the absence of 'hard' information about the proposed structure of the remainder of the year.

Organisational difficulties were highlighted and the size of the Course criticized. A shift system was proposed, the assumption being quite seriously made that the staff had nothing to do on the days that the students were in the field.

"Complaints were rife about Course and field not being in touch with each other - both were out of touch - the Course was in two halves which didn't relate - and workloads were too high. Supervisors and tutors needed to co-operate more. They felt in a double bind, they were being assessed in the field and if they didn't fulfil placement work expectations the criteria would "have you" at assessment.

"Time was spent on the perplexity of 'getting on' with staff - how to meet them and be real with them as people. "Imagine meeting F in a pub, they wouldn't know what to do", they built fantasy up about this and really enjoyed it - Lynn asked me what she (the staff member) was really like - my response "warm, human, humorous" was dropped in and the ogre like fantasy pursued again. (Pub after meeting 7.2.73)

The/...

The list of concerns generated as a consequence follows. It will be seen that it reflects the general concerns so far identified, yet is mild in comparison to the strength of feeling within the student meeting.

POINTS FOR DISCUSSION FOR MEETING ON 21ST

FEBRUARY 1973

Placements

1. Though we are aware of the organisational problems of allocating students to fieldwork placements, we have found the following difficulties.

a. We have found it frustrating to be given only a week's notice of our next placements, and wonder why some students who were told early were asked to keep so quiet about it?

b. About half a dozen students were seriously dissatisfied with their placements, could this have been avoided by using some sort of provisional list, or if the students had been consulted more while you were deciding?

2. Are supervisors expected to give a particular amount of supervision time to their students, because there seems to be some variation?

Similarly, there is quite a variation in the amount of process recording expected.

Course

1. Casework - we would question whether we have been/...

been taught casework in a wide enough variety of settings and applications. Put another way, we would question our ability, from what we have been taught so far, to choose a particular way of working for a particular client or group of clients.

2. Particularly in view of the increase in size of the Course, we would like to see more seminars and small group teaching used. We would also like to see options offered, not on the old M.S.W., P.S.W. or child care system, but in other directions, so that we can choose what we feel would suit us.

3. Many of us feel that we could do with a break between placements, not for a holiday as such, but rather a time to do some academic work or preparation for the next placement.

4. Those who have read the report prepared by the staff for C.C.E.T.S.W. feel that we would have liked to have read it at the beginning of the course, because it gives a clear idea of what the staff hope to offer, and the kind of subjects that will be discussed throughout the year.

The review, an occasion for "bullet proof vests" was quite an angry and difficult affair. It was based on the students' paper. Key themes were questioning of the Course/...

Course organisation re placements and choice of supervisor from the students - reinterpreted as "having difficulty in trusting the outfit" by staff. Students experienced it initially as constructive, their point of view had been put, staff as critical and untrusting and supervisors as attacked.

"I feel attacked and sore" "the problem is one of trust and communication".

(Supervisor after meeting 21.2.73)

It did, however, provide an opportunity for an exchange of views, and perhaps as importantly, it marked a stage in the development of the student group as they united in the face of adversity and stress. It appeared to pave the way to a widening of student contact within the group, to a slightly greater degree of social activity, and to a clearer sense of purpose.

Happy Families - The Placement Changeover

The new placement list heralded the next phase, one in which there was much discussion, swapping of information, and sharing of views. For the most part students were satisfied with the position, a few, about six, were not. They wanted to swap or change, and set about this through tutors with the support of the group with some determination. A typically positive experience and view point was as follows:

"I went downstairs with Sheelagh. She said she was quite pleased about her next placement. "I think/...

"think it's up to me to get what I want out of it". She went on that she'd had a good assessment, this gave her confidence, but she was really sad to be leaving".

(Fieldnotes 13.2.73)

Unhappiness was attributed to practical difficulties in the main. Travelling was felt to be a real burden, as indeed to travel to Dundee daily I think is, and more difficult when one student did not get travelling expenses. Another had experience already in the designated placement and did not want to repeat, so that complaints and requests for change tended to be made on this kind of basis. Unfortunately as there was not a surplus of placements available to change involved moving someone else who had already designated themselves as happy. This led to considerable ill feeling. Students felt pressed by having to consider the needs of others at a point when their own felt paramount. Change and uncertainty were in the air, Sheelagh summed it up,

"at least that's an end of the fantasy now".

(Fieldnotes 13.2.73)

Placement swapping, described by a tutor as "like playing Happy Families", created a good deal of tension and swaps were recorded and shared as stages in individual students' 'battles' proceeded. Alongside this ran a series of shared judgements about supervisors and placements which corroborated earlier perception of what was valued.

Approbation/...

Approbation was given.

"A is excellent, terrific; she is very good and clear and supportive".

"B was good at first, she gets busy and her interest tails off".

"I had it pretty smooth with C". Fears about supervision which might be too close or not close enough pervaded discussion.

"some supervisors are terrible, not good at all, they made you process record everything, every single thing and give very intensive casework supervision on it, I'm glad I'm going into something wider". (Coffee 14.2.73)

"You won't get very close supervision there, I've heard it isn't very good at all".

(Lunch queue 14.2.73)

Professionalism seemed to be valued,

"She's good, very professional, I've learned a lot, you can say what you think".. (Tea 20.2.73).

So dominant was the theme that even small group discussion time in class was used by the students to help sort one another out.—

"Talking about these global issues in class isn't any good, we were fed up, anyway I was still sorting out my placement".

(After class 20.2.73)

Staff mediated in these struggles and eventually everyone was/...

was "more or less" happy about the outcome. The change in the teaching programme unsupported by proper timetables added significantly to the sense of 'mystery tour'. Who or what was coming next no one ever seemed to know - all very confusing. Anger was still about being directly expressed.

"At coffee with Sara, Rosemary, Doreen and Morag, Sara and Morag suddenly said they were simply blazing mad. They were fed up with the morning, the lectures had been dreadful, they'd felt like walking out. All these global questions like "is casework dead?" Criticisms flowed, if the lectures had come last term when they'd wanted those questions answered it'd have been something.

Doreen looked uncomfortable. "I'm not angry any more. I've got over mine. I found it useful". They switched to talk, mostly hesitantly, about things they thought were o.k. about lectures. They talked about depression. "Most people were around Christmas". Sara and Morag said they thought in a way they still were "things are still pretty heavy for most people".

Reflectively they attributed most of the stress to the lecture content, all that Human Growth and Behaviour, "things just hit you".

(Canteen 21.2.73)

The/...

The sorting out process took approximately ten days and was eventually settled though the wear and tear on students, tutors and fieldwork teachers involved had been pretty high.

Second Placements - The Honeymoon Stage

The beginning of the second placements began a new phase of comparison. Approximately ninety per cent of conversation centred on the field experience. As before students were involved in and interested in each others experiences - some needed more support than others.

"I went into the library where people had congregated waiting for class. I looked at the notice board and listened. All around were animated conversations about placements and supervisors, Initial impressions, whether as expected or not, how old supervisors were, handy hints"

(Library 27.2.73)

"Rob came up he had just started at the hospital. He felt well, he liked it, he thought it was going to good. "I think Kate is going to be a good supervisor". People had been friendly he hadn't wanted to go there, but now he thought it would be good".

(Library 27.2.73)

"I think it will be good" with variations was the theme of the next period. Students evidently had a considerable investment/...

investment in having a good experience, knew more what they wanted and set about the business of fieldwork with energy. First week impressions were important and people reassured themselves publicly again and again on the basis of this initial meeting. As before the supervisor as a person was central to the discussion though there was more emphasis than I had yet heard on the totality of the agency and the scope which it allowed the students.

"I like C, she's funny but I think she's going to be very good she handles the other staff brilliantly, gets things across well to them she's explained about the difficulty of getting work in the past, but I really think it's going to be good".

"He's different (to the last supervisor) but I like him, I think he'll be good" ... Lynn who'd been with him the previous placement said anxiously "you will like him won't you. He's very good, gets right down to the bottom of things". (Canteen 27.2.73)

"I like the area, everyone was very friendly, a nice young staff, many professionally trained. I like D, he's good. He asked me three crucial questions at the beginning, they were the real root of the matter, I've never been asked questions like that before" - my last supervisor kept saying "you are very good" which was nice but/...

"but "not much help". (Canteen, tea 27.2.73)

"Hilary was in earnest conversation with a friend.

She "isn't very dynamic but I think there are ways in which she might be useful".

(27.2.73 overheard in Canteen)

"My life is completely altered. I feel so relaxed; her tutor had commented on it. It was the relief of being out of that last placement, she had found the fussing and anxiety of the supervisor just got her. Now

I'm at [REDACTED] (the source of endless complaint earlier). It's really great.

I like the place, the staff are friendly.

I'm able to meet them for coffee or lunch, not

"watched" all the time like before. The

supervisor "seems o.k. we can see her any

time, see her anyhow a lot at meetings. It

seems as if it will work out, I think it will

probably be all right". (Before class 28.2.73)

"I'm happy enough I think but my supervisor is

middleaged, fussing and leading you about by

the hand". The others were amused, this was

well known but not really believed, so the story

was amusingly told. She hadn't "got a case or

anything like that". The wards seem nice and

the plans for meeting staff are probably o.k.

"I think she'll be able to help me in limited areas/...

"areas, even if she's not all that dynamic I just have to accept that and be aware of her limitations". (Canteen, tea 28.2.73)

"My life is revolutionised. I'm with Kate and think it will be good". (Canteen, coffee 28.2.73)

"I've spent a day in mine and I know I like it and it'll be good". (Overheard on stairs 28.2.73)

A few people had had negative experiences and these were bitterly felt against this almost honeymoon attitude to the new placements. Based on similarly brief experience they were equally convincing.

"W is just not acceptable, I've been to tell my tutor so. It's really the supervisor, I'd been told how good he was. He isn't much use at all". It seemed that he was very withdrawn, never said anything, "you couldn't get to know him as a person at all". (Tea, canteen 28.2.73)

Within these descriptions are several important factors. Feeling welcomed and encountered by the supervisor was clearly valued. Within this positive experience students exercised discrimination, the professional approach and the crucial question were identified as aspects of particular import. Being liked or nice was no longer enough, for there was too an emerging preoccupation with the agency and the other workers with whom the student will work and identify. In fact one agency which did not allow students into staff discussions was the focus of/...

of quite distressed comments. There was too a much clearer sense of the student's identity, of them as beginning workers knowing what they were looking for or settling for in a situation. This emerging sense of professional identity is clearly seen in the material - partly as above and partly in the preoccupation with personal space and room to move in the agency.

It is interesting that at this stage some designated 'baddies' became 'goodies', and for just this reason. Greater freedom was desired and welcomed and the less close attention of the supervisor who expected students to make clear their demands was felt to be valuable. In the earlier placement this more relaxed attitude and less involved approach was interpreted as lack of care and gave rise to much anxiety and anger. The subsequent disappearance of all 'baddies' was an interesting feature of the coming term. Presumably it was a consequence of the students' increased confidence, clarity about task and emerging professional identity. Also where projection and splitting were used as defences they were to a large extent withdrawn, and the "good enough" supervisor and student worked out a modus vivendi together.

As the agency and colleagues grew in importance so too did the professional opportunities available. Case discussion and issues of policy emerged as topics for long earnest or heated discussion, and received much attention. Special heed was given to student accounts of new ventures, such/...

such as interviewing an adolescent girl and her family for the first time with a psychiatric colleague, or a joint marital interview with a registrar.

Assessment - Vulnerability - Anger

Assessment was a subject which created a lot of feeling but was not openly discussed to any extent. Students clearly felt very vulnerable about it but on the whole it remained a subject for private as opposed to public conversation. Friends shared their reports with each other and clearly knew the contents of each other's reports, and I overheard a series of private conversations, but as a subject it did not surface.

"It hasn't been openly discussed" Pip said, "but there are strong feelings there, they just hadn't come out yet". Maybe it couldn't she didn't know. The anger about placements was masking it but it was there. People had had very mixed experiences. Anna said hers wasn't going to let her see it, so where did that take her?"

(Coffee canteen 28.2.73)

Indeed experiences seemed where described to vary widely. Some had done thorough work with very full participation on the assessment criteria and had copies of their reports. Others had had brief conversations or been told they "were happy about her, a positive assessment, which is hard if you are not sure what you doing yourself". Where there had been full discussion or even confrontation there was equally greater certainty,

"Rob/...

"Rob said it had been useful to have a report even if it wasn't very good. He thought now it was important to be in touch with where you were, this gave you a chance to tackle any difficulties there were".

(Coffee, canteen 7.3.73)

Those students whose reports were not ready nor handed to the next supervisor evinced some anxiety and got public support. One group never did receive theirs' and this was a source of concern, somehow their first placement and experience there was not properly legitimated or useable - or that was how it felt.

" "We haven't had ours yet, we keep phoning up but nothing has come" they felt the anxiety was theirs', how would things be put. They thought they knew the content but had "forgotten the details" not having seen the reports. Somehow it "devalued" the placement, they had "nothing to show" for where they are now".

(Coffee, canteen 14.3.73)

The anger which underlined the review, and the placements issue was retained in some quarters as the term neared its end. It seemed to centre on feelings of vulnerability -

"we feel in a double bind. We are being asked to say what we feel, we are "fed up" with it.

The review was an example, some had spoken for themselves, others for those who felt less able now they were angry and uncertain what it had all been/...

"been about - nothing would be done about it anyway - had they just been given a chance to blow?" (Canteen, coffee 7.3.73)

Supervisors at this point were felt to be more in tune with students - a class meeting reflected this, but the tutors and students were reckoned by the students to have a communication problem. The staff were identified (correctly as it happened) as being in conflict and the parties identified. They wanted to meet them as people and be seen sometimes as people too but,

"you couldn't meet them for a drink, you never knew really what they felt or thought - the response you got really mattered. It was like a "one way mirror", the staff just saw them as students".

"There was a lack of feedback. The review had been a 'con', they felt in a 'double bind', they didn't think anything would really be changed".

(Student meeting 32/49, class, 7.3.73)

Lectures too were the focus for ongoing criticism though some students now held publicly that some lectures were useful - ~~there~~ was little consensus though. Work was the focus:

"Barbara gave an account of the afternoon she'd spent working with a registrar, and a joint interview they'd done. She talked with evident enjoyment of the freedom to be with staff there and the quality of staff relationships. They'd done/...

"done this interview and afterwards they'd been late and he'd wanted a lot of help for himself. She was amused at the amount of insight she'd shown - she'd really enjoyed it".

(Tea, canteen 13.3.73)

Coming to grips with the placement did, however, begin to raise some dilemmas of role and structure which were complex to understand. Against a generally positive view some worries were being raised in questions which were to be developed the next term. There was talk of the coming "March Depression" - a stage enshrined in Course myth, - but little evidence of it so far among the students.

The Supervisors' World

'Day to day' activity continued as before and the rhythm of meetings seemed to provide abundant material to illumine the ongoing interests and tasks of the fieldwork teachers. The public and private patterns of interaction were largely unchanged, as was the dynamic of the relationship between Course and field. Several factors, however, combined to create stressful relations in this period and require attention.

Firstly, I have already highlighted the demands for all involved inherent in the normal change expectations of the official curriculum for the Spring Term. Secondly, in developing an awareness of the different levels and rhythms of activity within the organisational administrative and teaching tasks of a University Department the question of/...

of relationship and involvement over differing time spans assumes significance. Long term organisational planning and teaching matters happen over an extended time scale, while the direct teaching task happens within a time bounded period namely one year. It is at the level of the teaching task, directly related to the demand and thrust of the students' learning, that the supervisors are primarily involved. This perspective might be felt to increase their vulnerability to being caught up in the emotional dynamic created by this pattern of events. Thirdly, there is a coming together or clustering of tasks at this stage in the year which taken separately are easily manageable but together could be felt to increase stress because of the reinforcement of uncertainty inherent in each. Selection issues, mid-course student educational issues, pass/fail anxieties, fall together with organisational and personal change demands on both staff and fieldwork teachers within the same short period of time.

Given these background pressures; however, the relationship between Course and field had a robust quality that spoke of mutual respect, if not always understanding, and of long term relationships which enabled frank exchange of views. The basis for this robust relationship was increasingly the subject of interest, and it is to those aspects of it which enhance understanding of the supervisory role and task to which I now want to turn.

The/...

The Struggle for Certainty

Central to this idea of relationship is the question "is there a contract between Course and field?" and if so "on what assumptions is it based?" This theme was the focus of much discussion in the period under review, and ideas and feelings about it varied.

"it's difficult to accept, reject or change an assumption if you don't know it exists. Am I potentially making a mess of what the other side is trying to do? I don't know what mine are, nor what are those of the academic side. The potential is that they are in conflict but I'm not even clear what they would be".

(New supervisor at meeting 10.1.73)

The "haziness" which course and field felt about each other, their practice and expectations emerged clearly.

It seemed that in the face of uncertainty there was pressure for the school "to know". Indeed the pressure "to know, to be certain", was to grow as the term with its inherent uncertainties progressed. Where people "stood" became an issue. For example in the meeting referred to above the tutor present declared a stance -

"just my stance. One of the things I hold is to be able to value differences but within something, not total consensus. (Meeting 10.1.73)

The difficulty seemed to be in knowing what that something was -

"My/...

"My stance is where I stand, I can't say more than that". "But", replied a supervisor, "do you have any idea where the school stands?"

(Meeting 10.1.73)

Agreement in principle was possible in broad areas but the struggle between the two groups continued as some common frame was sought. Areas such as expectations of professional learning seemed to raise little conflict and phrases like -

"putting experience into theory and framework",

"a 'whole' sense of learning".

met with apparent approval. Set, however, in the context of a meeting between tutors and supervisors the relative value of each in the process seemed an underlying issue. Did the Course hold assumptions about reflecting field needs in training, or did the University have some leadership function in identifying and promoting changes in practice? The academic versus the practitioner as reflecting the complex process of education in social work and the nature of the role differentiation involved was reflected in the following interaction.

"In my school the rule was no counselling of any student by any faculty for any student for any reason". This was based on the idea you had to be ill to have counselling, nothing thought about therapy as growth process, it's what the person feels it to be. It still exists there, counselling/...

"counselling labelled teaching - but the choice factor is not there for either side".

Therapy as a component of education was felt to be recognisable and, at times, necessary, Clarity so that student choice was possible was upheld as a value. Supervisors placed boundaries in different places -

"Everyone has problems. What matters is not interfering with ability to cope with clients - they are there as student social workers and not as patients". (Meeting 10.1.73)

Inherent in this debate too were questions about type of learning and standards. One supervisor admitted that he would engage in therapy explicitly with a student within a separate contract. Others would not do so. But the relationship of the therapeutic element to the pass/fail issue could not be ignored. What assumptions were made about standards? Generally there was a belief in a standard, recognisable and identifiable though one supervisor maintained that any student who spent time in his placement passed. This challenge, that there were no grounds for failure in a social work course as all had something to contribute, stood unanswered.

Beliefs about student contribution and standard were clearly present in the thinking about selection which dominated much of the public discussion this term. I do not plan to expand on selection issues in this paper but merely to draw attention to the dilemmas they posed. Supervisors/...

Supervisors and tutors together were involved in each selection, and the usual procedure is outlined in the appended Information for C.C.E.T.S.W. document!¹ Successful selection depended on interviews held:-

"to form an opinion about the ego strengths of the applicant, and whether these are sufficient to enable him/her to deal with the inevitable stresses involved in such a Course"

and furthermore

"the staff are confident that methods of sampling used in interviewing usually yield a fair measure of uniformity about the ego strengths and capacity of a particular candidate. Judgement then enters in"

Suffice it to say that confidence and judgement were less evident in the process of preparing jointly to select; the questions about selection of whom, for what, unanswered, dominated the scene.

It is not surprising that the thread running through almost all discussion in this term was an attempt to identify the aims and essential nature of social work.

Felt as a real struggle, the groups returned again and again to this theme. If these basic questions could be answered, and the answers agreed, then much else would be plain sailing - issues of selection, evaluation and standard would become clear, or at least clearer. The issue was regularly personalised. If the groups could agree/...

agree about the kind of person they thought would be an effective social worker then all would be well. A liking and caring for other people was the basis for social work, students needed to find other people fascinating, and to be sufficiently problem free not to fall over themselves.

"I have rarely met the superhuman person who is defying society in any way. I am not helping people to adapt to society but to be at peace with themselves".

"Man is gregarious and cannot exist alone. He needs evidence of love and care from others - I would hope this would be how we would approach it". (Fieldwork Teachers in meeting 23.1.73)

The complex business of evaluation and of knowing if the student really had these qualities provided stimulus. Characteristics of the students felt to be "problematic" at this stage are interesting in what they tell us of supervisors' expectations of the supervisory relationship and of student standard. Those labelled "problematic" were the focus of much anxious discussion and little material was available on the correspondingly positive side, 'good' students did not make for public discussion.

The unsatisfactory relationship with the supervisor was the first and most regularly identified component. These students were described as unsharing, and making the supervisor feel uncomfortable in a range of ways. Feeling angry or anxious or punitive or destructive were the common/...

common emotions expressed as supervisors described their discomfort.

Avoidance of the content of Human Growth and Behaviour came next, phrased as avoidance of the dynamic relationship and focused on issues of authority and dependency. Commitment would be in question and defensive activity such as projection or splitting in evidence. Finally there were issues of client work. Failure to understand limits, overidentification with clients, unprofessional dress, and inability to meet the client in areas of aggression and sexuality were common.

"You wonder what it is about, you have to trust.

There is a long stage of doubt, something goes on - it will come together".

(Fieldwork teacher reflecting at meeting 25.1.73)

Identification of these issues necessarily raised others. How to 'match' such students with second placement supervisors using such criteria as 'learning needs', the students' declared preference and the specialist contribution of particular agencies? Attempts certainly were made, even if I regarded them with some disbelief, and some staff put much energy into the process. Based on vague definitions and little accurate information it could, in my view, only be a question of hunch. Yet the process inevitably raised more clearly the possibility of misunderstanding which existed between both parties. Aware of mutual ignorance and yet the scrutiny inherent in/...

in the evaluation process, tutors, supervisors and students tended to feel vulnerable. "Scrutinized" a fashionable word. Did both sides need to know more about each others contribution?

"the topic of discussion is the question of not knowing what is being taught on the Course.

Supervisor A: "I am a practitioner, there's a danger of me being out of touch, an element of me always being a student on placement".

Tutor: "Yes, scrutinizing rather than just doing, that's what new supervisors find exciting, looking at their practice again".

Supervisor A: "Yes it is, you can feel 1, 2, 3 ways about the doing the same thing".

Supervisor B: "A lot of what we do is getting by. At points the two parts fit together. Students survive and get a lot from the Course. I feel we could be much more helpful or get further if there was more mutual understanding".

Supervisor A: "Some of it is terminology and I'm having some trouble with mine maybe the things I'm asking him (the student) aren't easy to do ... the words I'm using not familiar, maybe not the same concepts".

Tutor: "What kind of words, give an example".

Supervisor A: "The processone uses to arrive at certain conclusions, I don't know what he is getting/...

"getting out of the Course at all. If I thought it was the same, I'd make a conscious effort to use the same things, it needs terrific reinforcement".

Tutor: "Some jump to concepts or learn from a particular situation and need help to transfer. I know a little about the psychiatry lectures I'm not sure what else they've got".

Supervisor C: "It never occurred to me until this month that I needed to know more about this Course. I feel guilty and I push it away. I can never sort out all these diplomas"

Supervisor A: "Last year they were picking up and using theory object relations"

Supervisor C: "I don't know and I don't know that I have to - I couldn't possibly grasp all that".

Supervisor A: "If they are learning anything they are keeping it secret".

(Fieldnotes 25.1.73)

Clearly the search for mutual understanding involved risks. It is easy to talk and much time was spent talking at this level, and much harder to give examples and really share practice based thinking. It is easy too to assume that within the Course itself there is mutual knowledge of content where as the reality is more as the extract suggests, staff do not necessarily know in any detail amongst themselves the nature of taught content. At what level and to/...

to what extent does this matter?

Certainly in this phase what mattered was the comparability of experience. Supervisors experienced pressure to have given similar experiences, to measure up to their perceptions of Course expectations. Transitional anxieties were concerned with what was 'right', and had the student been given 'that'. Also with the methods of evaluating the experience and exercising authority as teacher/evaluator. This activity was characteristically felt to be very difficult, presumably in the light of the external expectations of the University and the shared nature of the process. The emotional processes of separation, real for supervisor as for student, complicated the happening and supervisors expressed anger and behaved in confronting ways with staff. Student anger and confrontation was explained as projected feelings about coming change.

"It's difficult to leave (the placement) until you know where you are going".

(Fieldnotes, supervisor 21.2.73)

Staff reminded themselves of

"the need to demonstrate to ourselves certainty and some recognition of our own authority and leadership". (Tutor, fieldnotes 21.2.73)

as they faced the combined angers of students and field teachers in this emotionally charged period.

The Course review served as a focus for the field teachers/...

teachers' anger and sense of outrage, with the Course and with the students. Backing the students strongly on the 'appalling' mix-up of placement organisation they expressed horror at the communication attempts in the large group review of approximately eighty people.

(Students, tutors and fieldteachers). "A large group trying to behave like a small group" was how they defined it. They challenged the necessity for such a review and felt that staff had not conducted it adequately, "had not held on to their authority". They wanted

"leadership and stance".

"you don't have a stance. As a Department you do not have one. I have to say this".

(Supervisor fieldnotes 7.3.73)

The standards and evaluation procedures of the Course were suspect.

"I hate your criteria - verbose and not clear at all". (Supervisor, meeting 7.3.73)

Finally as anger began to subside the question of individual stance became an area for rueful laughter.

"I don't know if I have one, then something happens and I resent it, I do have a stance".

(Supervisor, meeting 7.3.73)

What this stance might or should consist of was never really identified. That there should be one, some body of upholdable and inviolate principles, was the hopeful belief. Someone else would just have to define it.

New/...

New Students, New Relationships

The phase from mid-February to the end of term reflected those themes already familiar from the previous beginning and as before the students' feelings and concerns. The students' learning, the theoretical content of the Course and the business of finding an appropriate place to begin -

"I said to one of mine "just stop reading object relations theory and going on about it, go and see if you can really meet that old lady who is depressed"." (Supervisor at meeting 8.3.73)

Resentful of having to go into changed gear with new students, uncertain of where they were or should be, the supervisors expressed depressed empty feelings.

"They (the students) are all so blooming enthusiastic about what they are going to learn it doesn't feel real". (Supervisor 8.3.73)

"I feel flat, depressed, it's me the last group have gone and I haven't got rid of them, I feel very flat". (New unit fieldteacher 8.3.73)

"Everyone considers the students, you need to give attention to your own feelings about this".
(Supervisor at meeting 9.3.73)

Finally the phase was experienced as a time of conflict and conflicting demands and interests between Course and field. Complicated by the strong feelings associated with change there was much attributed to the students' paranoid/...

paranoid reactions to the Course and to problems of trust. That they were not alone in their response tended to escape notice.

Policy and Partnership

The business of working constructively in the longer term with the Course continued to perplex the field. I had gained access to the Policy and Administration Committee in this term and therefore had the opportunity of listening to and observing the interaction between the two groups, the supervisors on the one hand and the Policy and Administration Committee on the other together with the performance of the three representatives who mediated the one to the other. The meetings were held fortnightly throughout term and lasted usually one and a half hours.

Officially the Policy and Administration Committee, chaired by the Head of the Department, was the key policy making committee of the social work section of the Department. To it was brought for ratification all matters of policy or disagreement together with more formally worked out teaching programmes etc. before they were presented to the Board of Studies, the outside world of the University. Comprised as it was of the social work teaching staff, plus the Professor and one representative from the Social Administration teaching staff plus three field representatives, this meant that the staff had often already discussed issues themselves and were presenting views really for ratification. Some matters were not clearly explained and difficult for an outsider to immediately/...

immediately follow and sometimes it was not clear what was going on. There was little real room for contributions from the field and when these were made they could feel like interruptions to tidy plans. The Committee too was used as a forum for conflict not resolved in the staff group which, while not made explicit, made it an uncomfortable place to be. The agenda was prepared by the staff, and the field representatives had little role - except as bearers of information, questioners or raisers of perplexing field issues which were not tackleable in the situation.

The content of the Committee's work centred on matters such as the financial position of the department, the teaching issues important to acceptance as a Course suitable for Probation students from England/Wales, and the administration and organisation of selection procedures. The use of the department's time and planning procedures, and the developing philosophy of the Course occupied much time, not surprisingly in the light of much that has gone before. A Two Year Course and the differential use of staff skills within an overall programme were real areas for lengthy discussion. In other words the Committee, although reflecting/^{and}influenced by the current stresses and conflicts within the Course, was focusing at another level, a longer term one of principle, development and planning.

The role of the fieldteachers in this was seriously affected/...

affected by several factors. Firstly the group was pretty uncertain about its own role and purpose, did it have one? Secondly the Policy and Administration Committee having asked for representatives from the field displayed a singular ambivalence about having them, demonstrated most clearly in the observable behaviour of the group when challenged by the representatives. Dis-ease, in the form of uncomfortable laughter, impatience or an unwillingness to take the issue seriously was frequently the response, thus reinforcing the uncertainty of the representatives. Matters they wanted to raise tended to come under "Any Other Business" at the end of a long day of meetings for the staff, and were necessarily complex as they involved issues of course/field relevance and inter-relatedness. Thirdly, they had the difficult role of belonging yet not belonging, as they met and were interested in the various proposals and committees which were set up, and of deciding whether or not to be involved themselves. Aware of staff conflict, yet not always certain of the current 'game', they frequently allowed themselves to be 'seduced' into being the field representatives on other committees. Thus they effectively deprived their colleagues of opportunities and, I felt, often disenfranchised them. It is a peril of this role that communication both ways is limited and this certainly occurred, as, at times feeling more akin to the staff than the supervisors, they berated their colleagues for a/...

a lack of enthusiasm and support which often bore a direct relationship to the lack of real information and opportunity for further involvement which their own behaviour had created.

The question might be asked what were the supervisors wanting in being involved at this level? They asked themselves this question frequently. The answers lay in areas like the role of fieldwork assessment in the exams, ideas about Course expansion and the relationship of this to field teaching. The trouble was that not all supervisors saw their commitment to the Course this way. In February out of 40 letters to supervisors inviting them to a meeting only twelve responded and those who attended the meeting, the twelve regulars, were angry and in conflict with themselves and the Course. Those who attended were those who worked nearby who were unit teachers or associated with a unit teacher, and heads of small departments. It seemed less meaningful for unit teachers taking students from a number of courses, for those based further away, and for those who were supervising individual students. Pressure of time and agency commitment to training were important here, but not the whole answer.

"A representative: "I feel I'm a lot more committed than many people and it makes me feel very cross. I'm not doing justice to the 'less commitment' of other people".

Supervisor: "I find it hard to grasp the issues and/...

"and the essentials. . Something about conveying these University issues. I don't feel involved at all, makes me feel guilty. I find it hard to know what you are trying to work out with them".

Other representative: "It's how things get on the agenda. If already discussed at a tutor's meeting it comes worked on. I don't feel part of it some issues you wouldn't be interested in". (Supervisors' meeting 14.2.73)

There was increasing awareness of the communication difficulties at the supervisors' end, and of their ongoing capacity for misperceiving each other. Crystallised when the group received a visit from a tutor.

"Discussion was on the lack of staff perception of field pressures, the unrealistic timing of meetings, poor organisation of placements etc. It was angry. A suggestion was brought from the staff group that meetings the following week might be altered to enable more discussion between supervisors of students transferring placements. "A fine idea but how can it be organised in the time" followed by rather electric discussion of timing difficulties, feelings about trust and working together".

(Fieldnotes 14.2.73)

By the end of the term the difficulty was being expressed more openly by group and representatives. Would things be/...

be better if they involved tutors in this meeting?

"I have a feeling we are beginning to have some identity, not wanting to revert to a dependent position but to look at what we feel important and then present this"....

"What I feel from going to the Policy and Administration Committee is a greater sense of the tutors' lostness. If we could form a mature point of view, discuss our problem, this would be very valuable".

"We know they are as perplexed as us, no reason for them to be authorities, maybe we could invite one or two to answer factual questions about the Course etc." (Fieldnotes 19.3.73)

There was open recognition too of the emotional pressure of attending the Policy and Administration Committee and of the difficulty of knowing how much to convey, though less awareness of the 'closing off' role which the representatives played. Nevertheless the end of the term saw an enhanced position with greater awareness of the reality situation and more mutual acceptance of human frailty.

The Tutors' World

This was a world under real pressure in the Spring Term. The realistic external pressure of selection added significantly to the workload, as did the preparation of material for the visit of the C.C.E.T.S.W. The change-over/...

over of placements and teaching programmes had to be masterminded, and the impact of the angry response borne. More subtly the questions about the nature of social work and the aims of the Course created their own pressure, and the dynamic within the group as it coped remained similar to that of the previous term.

As before I felt dissatisfied with my contact with this world, largely because of my ongoing exclusion from the tutors' meetings. My perception of what was going on was derived from a mixture of observation at the Policy and Administration Committee of the interaction and of private conversations. That there was a sense of acute stress was evident, in responses in and after meetings and in 'stories' which were told of fracas and upsets. My evidence lay in the emotional time and energy which was invested when people talked individually about the situation.

The main difficulties in this phase were felt to be associated with the impending retirement of the leader, which in the absence of another appointment, and at a time of pressure, left the group angry and leaderless, but with some bids for this. There was recognition of the problem of managing the placement change though members of staff blamed each other for what one described as a "right hash". It was like playing "happy families" in the "department of maladministration". There was some amused if discomfited observation on the group's acting out/...

out of its problem in public meetings which implied some disassociation from the whole. A positive move proved to be the setting up of a staff group to discuss teaching of social work method and I could vouch for the confidence and increased knowledge that the tutor I worked with brought as a consequence. New staff continued to find the emphasis unacceptable - especially the undue emphasis on Object Relations Theory and casework theory. "I suppose I'll have to read some Hollis, I don't think basically it's much use". (6.3.73) Some anxiety about my data, methods of collection and aims arose at this time perhaps not surprisingly. I dealt with it factually and heard no more.

Pressure, scapegoating, anger, tears, punctuated the term's work/^{for}the staff group. Frequently members described themselves as exhausted or tried to keep apart from all that was going on. Factioning took a lot of time and energy as difficult organisational and teaching issues were dealt with in personal terms. It was difficult as a new member explained "not to take sides though I'm not sure how much longer I can be patient". (12.2.73) In fact the new members found themselves both outside and perplexed:

"I'd like to see more sense talked and more organisation in the department. We need flow charts to plan work and more attention paid to practicalities - more commonsense". (21.3.73 in office) and/...

and put differently by another:

"In this new staff group there's a lack of identity we need to spend time in the creation of trust tutors have quite different stances". (20.3.73)

In fact the relationship of the organisational to the personal lies at the root of the problem. Would better organisation enable work presently only possible if trust existed? At what level are both important? The trust believed in and hoped for seemed to me to have a rather unreal quality and to be a substitute for many necessary activities like clarity of thought, reorganisation and leadership problems. This is not to say that it is not important, but needs a frame and focus to be meaningful as a concept.

Thus the term ended. A time of anger, conflict and confrontation beset by heavy demands on energy and understanding for all involved. The complex interaction of levels of activity together with programme and personal change response required from all three groups is particularly interesting in the demand which it created for certainty and trust in a difficult essentially uncertain and human world.

Worlds in Conflict - The Second Term

<u>Student</u>	Reactive to Dependency. Angry Rejection of Authority. The Group as a basis for conflict.
<u>Learning</u>	
<u>Phase</u>	
<u>Course</u>	Very High Change Expectations All Groups
<u>Framework</u>	
Students	
Fieldteachers	
Tutors	
<u>Tasks</u>	
Students	Alteration of the public and private boundary within the self. Self evaluation as a prelude to formal assessment. Handling placement changeover - relinquishing relationships with clients and fieldteacher. Creating new relationships in new agency situation. Critical evaluation of course content and expectations
Fieldteachers	Mutual understanding of course standards as a basis for evaluation. Evaluation and Assessment Dealing with uncertainty of not knowing when/...

Tutors

when pressured by student confrontation
Ending placement, changeover, and
beginning again.
Accepting own feelings of loss and stress
in change

Selection.
Organising and handling structural change
Accepting and understanding of stage
specific reactions of anger and hostility
in students and fieldteachers.
Teaching new courses.
Creating new relationships with the field
Evaluative activity
Long term planning and policy

Communication

Mode

Uncertain, Conflictual, Angry

CHAPTER VIII

Chapter VIII - "IT, The Resolution"

"IT has happened earlier this year".

(Senior lecturer, 28.5.73)

This chapter is concerned primarily with the concept of resolution. Shortly to emerge as young professionals the impetus of the students' learning is towards integration of self and work situation, towards a greater sense of professional identification. The structure of the term's teaching and examination expectations laid the frame within which this work was achieved as the Course moved on with a heightened awareness of the limited time span involved, a span which is drawing inexorably to an end. As before the intergroup activity between students, fieldteachers and tutors appeared significantly influenced by the nature of the students' learning and general conflict diminished in the interests of the achievement of integration, the making sense of the relationship between Course and field. The content has been pruned in this phase in an attempt to lay bare the processes which occurred as they become increasingly familiar and their significance is understood. 'Focusing down' in this phase is made easier by the increasing emphasis on integration as the primary business, and by the consequent diminution in general conflict which occurred.

Structure of the Term

First then let us examine the structure and programme for the term and consider the effect which this must necessarily have on the Course's activities. The term ran/...

ran from mid-April until mid-June with one week's break for a long weekend in May to which was attached a three day Group Experience. This was an optional event which aimed to teach by means of an experientially focused conference about the here and now processes operating in small groups, large groups and within an inter-group exercise. It was modelled on the Leicester Conference organised by the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations and drew upon a similar theoretical frame¹. The pattern of the term was a concurrent one as before with students spending two days at University and three in the field. The lecture series were continuations of those already described within the last phase². They had started in mid-February and continued to the end of term. They were:

Applied Social Administration.

Principles and Practice of Social Work.

Research.

Social Work Method.

Seminar/Film Programme.

The formal programme, together with brief details of these Courses, is to be found in the Appendix. The term ended with exams, two papers and a practice based essay called a Situational Study. The exams aimed to bring theory and practice together in answering each question, though one paper traditionally had a compulsory case study (given out in advance) upon which some questions were based. The other paper was more theoretical in focus/...

focus though demanding the same 'mix' of theory and practice for success. Each student received an oral examination following the written papers. The Situational Study was expected to be a full account of the student's work in a practice situation which highlighted the problem being tackled, the theoretical understanding on which assessment and intervention was based, and an evaluation of the chosen method or methods of intervention. It was requested in March and required to be submitted by the end of May.

The rythm of the term then was created for all concerned by this programme. The pressure of exams fell on all involved, both students and staff, and the emphasis in class was increasingly 'hard'; facts and straight information, with discussion where it occurred being direct and to the point. Some material still required management outside the classroom, in particular the material given about families and the basis of marriage and marital choice. This generated considerable amused aggression and disbelief at the time and was the subject of a good deal of mainly 'private' conversation. Generally the focus was on getting down to work, to reading, and on attending those lectures which were felt to be relevant and valuable. As the pressure of the timing of the Situational Study grew the attendance at lectures fell off, and for some by the end of term was very poor indeed. Some, such as community work dropped to 12 out of a possible 49 and others ran at about 25. There/...

There was in the student world a sense of enormous pressure with the Study and exams as the focal points and energy was directed as people saw fit to that end. There were certainly different expectations and assumptions operating. Staff mounted a programme, seen as essential and packed, to the end; students feeling overwhelmed and pressed "selected out" of those lectures which seemed irrelevant or not essential to their primary concern. This left those staff whose material was presented at the end feeling angry about their timing in the Course and devalued in their contribution. There seemed to be a need for greater mutual understanding of work pressures and a review of the necessity for teaching right up to the examination period. A poorly attended programme requires to be examined for timing, relevance, and content, and must raise again the issue of the difficult compression of material essential to a generic one year venture such as this.

Research Difficulty

A word must be said too about the research task in this phase. The beginning of this term was a strange time when students and staff seemed very pressed and personally preoccupied. It was harder to be around, and I found myself feeling isolated and somehow outside in a way which had not happened before. It caused me to reflect on the role differences in the situation and on the pressures inherent in qualifying. Also on the stage of the process because it seemed that individual student/...

student energy was invested in "settling for" something, in really finding their own place or thing, and that this was an excluding activity. Staff also commented in this phase on a similar sense of being excluded, or of being used in conference to precise ends. In the abandonment of conflict and in movement on to resolution a more definite task focused period ensued.

The Students' World

This beginning of ending had as its primary concerns the main business of the term; settling into placements; finding jobs; and passing the exams. These served as the focus for the shared public work through which, as in preceding phases, the group's norms were established, and roles and activities legitimated with respect to staff groups and the outside world of the agencies. As before the themes were freely available in public conversation, widely shared, and provided an on-going picture of the work of becoming a social worker. The task was the completion of the Course. Inherent in this lay ideas about the relationship of the self to social work, the bringing together or integration of theory and practice, and the achievement of some sense of professional identity as a social worker. This section attempts to conceptualise and to illustrate this process, generated by the data obtained in and through the students' public legitimating work.

Second Placement - 'Settling In' and 'Settling For'

Initial discussion was of placements. Students had spent/...

spent a full time period of two weeks in their placements during the Easter vacation. This had given time to begin to "settle in", and to reconsider earlier judgements about goodness in the honeymoon phase described in the preceding chapter. The process had familiar characteristics. Familiar that is in relation to the work already described of "settling in" to first placements. Firstly students evaluated their own experience, and defined themselves as "happy and satisfied" or "unhappy and dissatisfied". This evaluative process seemed central to the business of beginning to get down to work. Secondly they compared evaluations with energy, seeking it seemed for some norm, some generally agreed sufficiently good situation. Thirdly, the components of these definitions and evaluative statements were similar to those shared in the previous placement, though the balance was different. There was marked shift in emphasis. The person and responsiveness of the supervisor was central, but now held in balance by the importance of the availability of appropriate work and of opportunity for the development of good staff and colleague relationships within the agency. Especially valued were those agencies which encouraged staff contact and social initiative. Placements earlier defined as 'bad' where the freedom in this dimension had, it seemed, contributed to a sense of lack of care now became highly valued. It seemed that it was just those qualities of freedom and opportunity for self definition of the task which caused them to be seen as good and particularly useful./...

useful. It seemed in a curious way that they had suddenly become age appropriate - that is in relation to the business of learning social work.

These beginning of term definitions gave indication too of a quicker move into testing out and sharing behaviour with the supervisor than was the case in the earlier placements. They give evidence of work already done, in "settling in" to a working relationship. Three examples follow:

"R is really very good. You really knew where you were with him, you could really tell him anything. Sometimes he was a bit embarrassed but would take things up with you. If he didn't read your process recording you could say "why not". "I expect you to"."

(Coffee, canteen, Lynn, Joyce and Jean 17.4.73).

"I really like C. She is very good indeed and very easy to be frank with. She is "ever so psychoanalytic" and at first it was hard to understand. Now team meetings are so useful, people talk about object relations, it links theory and practice for you".

(Coffee, as above 17.4.73)

A negative comparison by a student who felt "fed up" and that things were going badly had similar components:

"I don't have enough cases to really work on, communication with the doctors is difficult and I don't know what role I'm supposed to be playing. The/...

"The place is overrated, I wonder if they've moved with the times. The others feel the same. There's not enough responsibility. Also I don't get on with the supervisor. I find her superficial, she doesn't pick up the things I try to tell her, the things that are important".

(Coffee, canteen with Pam, Alys, Jean and Lynn 18.4.73)

In other words the business of beginning to settle in is dealt with by comparisons and by self definition. Inherent in these definitions is an enhanced preoccupation with role and professional task, with the integration of theory and practice, and with the establishment of a mutual perspective with the supervisor - now valued as instrumental in the task of learning social work, as opposed to preoccupation with the supervisor as a caring person in the earlier placement. "Settling in" was recognised by the students for the phase that it was, though it seemed that some at least of them experienced something of the isolation I too experienced at that time..

"I think I and others are worried about placements.

We didn't really enjoy the two weeks full time (at Easter) and now we feel inundated. It's not easy settling in, there's not been much group support, it's specially hard if you are on your own in an agency we are all getting ready for the last lap, and that's disconcerting".

(Two/...

(Two students talking, Classroom before
lecture 25.4.73)

If the business of "settling in" was characterised by self definition, evaluative activity and comparisons in relation to criteria like appropriate work, professional development opportunities, the relatedness of theoretical concepts and the mutuality of purpose with the supervisor, then the next stage was concerned primarily with those who were doubtful or unhappy about the process. They clearly needed help. How could this be done? "Handy hints" were the preoccupation of the first two weeks in May as the student body helped to "settle" their less happy members. These hints were widely discussed, but tended to be passed on in private as opposed to public conversation. I overheard many such conversations, normally concerned with the idiosyncracies of this or that particular supervisor or doctor. How they normally behaved, what they liked, what might work, were the items swapped as these students sought to ease into relationship, into a more settled perspective in their second and majorly important placement.

The work of getting into useful relationship was described by one student:

"I am pretty unhappy about my placement. I feel more pressured than earlier in the year. I don't get on with the supervisor. You have to do things her way to get what she offers, you can't really do things your way there. She is said/...

"said to be good but I'm not very sure yet.
I'd say I was trying to settle in but I don't
feel established yet". She added that she
knew several students in a similar position".

(Coffee, canteen, Flo, Winnie 2.5.73)

Engaging in direct discussion of the perceived difficulty
with either tutor or supervisor took some students longer
than others. Direct discussion and/or confrontation
characterised the next stage for these students and
prefaced the end of this phase, described by students
themselves as "settling for" the placement.

"Settling for" the placement completed the phase.
Within this was the idea of getting on with what you
could, with making the best of the position whether
originally defined as 'good' or 'bad'. These definitions
were more real, in that they took account of both positives
and negatives in situations, and of the possibilities which
existed. They were also primarily task focused.

"Moira said that in a personal way she felt more
settled. She felt freer to concentrate on her
cases the first few weeks had been a 'bad
experience' it had been a change from
hospital now "My supervisor is beginning
to emerge as a person and things could work out.
That's very personal but it's how I feel".

(Tea, canteen, Moira, Anna and Pen 1.5.73)

"Pen said her placement was 'undynamic'. It's
slow but I quite like it. "I've just settled
for/...

"for it, what else can you do". She went on that whether you did or not was a very personal matter. She'd heard it was awful before she'd gone, but they'd settled down and made the best of it. The supervisor was very caring, if protective, she'd like more stretch and responsibility".

(Tea, canteen, as above 1.5.73)

"Flo said "I almost found myself enjoying myself one day last week. I'll have to be careful". She laughed. She added that her supervisor was good but very impersonal. "I know nothing of her as a person". She felt she'd feel safer if she knew her better as a person but her teaching was good. "That's very important" and I have interesting work, two babies due next week".

(Coffee, canteen, Winnie and Flo 2.5.73)

There were few complaints about the supervisory process at this stage.- Where they emerged they were from those students who were having difficulty in settling, and may to some extent have contributed to that process. Superficiality, insufficient time for adequate discussion, apparent lack of capacity to focus on the students self as part of the social work process in an appropriate way, theoretical deficiencies, and talking too much, were the identified sins. Unsureness with the supervisor was generally reckoned to be a feature. "Unsureness limits effectiveness" was how one such student put it.

To/...

To summarise briefly, the students moved from a phase concerned with anger and confrontation into one primarily focused on "settling for" a learning opportunity which they had evaluated and accepted. The initial investment in the second placement, the honeymoon phase, was followed by a "settling in" period characterised by anxiety, self definition as good or bad, happy or unhappy, and by comparisons. Thus norms were created and accepted, and the problem of the 'unhappy' members received special attention. While concepts of task and professional opportunity were paramount the supervisory relationship continued to be important as instrumental to good learning and 'handy hints', direct discussion, and confrontation were common stages in achieving positive relationship. "Settling for" the placement experience, the end of this phase, was characterised by a task focused approach, an acceptance of personal role and responsibility in the situation, and of the negatives and positives in each.

IT, The Resolution?

A week later the senior lecturer in conversation commented "IT has happened earlier this year". IT, the thing that happened each year, was not so much defined as recognised. Staff were happy because IT had happened, this implied success. But what was IT?

Certainly it coincided directly with the ending of the "settling in" phase and was consonant with "settling for". Was it the completion of the phase already described or/...

or the beginning of the next? In a sense I think it is the name for the watershed which marks the passage from one phase of change activity to the next. An examination of the ongoing public conversation is very interesting in this connection.

Two things were clear. The student body's preoccupation with "settling for" had ended and a new focus for attention came about. This was a focus on the student as worker. Talk centred on agency practice, professional opportunities for growth and exchange, and on client centred work. Alongside this went a willingness to look back, to evaluate the whole course experience, and to identify the central learning of the Course.

The student as worker meant that interest and value centred on those aspects of the professional activity with which the student was identifying. Being part of the agency, having a range of positive and negative communication with staff of similar and different disciplines, having an increasing sense of autonomy, were the significant characteristics.. Assessment in the formal sense became part of this stage, but this time - discussion ~~was~~ public. Students described writing their own reports, and if stressful this was appreciated. There was acceptance of the idea of difference both between student and supervisor and between students. The emphasis was on the emergent autonomous self as a beginning professional taking a responsible part in self evaluation with some authority.

Attempts/...

Attempts by some students to publicly identify the central learning of the year were interestingly met with a feeling involved response.

"This course has been very painful. I think the self awareness I've gained is the most valuable bit". The others endorsed this, they felt the same, it was painful though".

(Tea, canteen, Pip, Lynn, Joyce, Sheelagh 29.5.73)

"Most centrally I've learned about handling relationship. Accepting and using my own feelings, utilising the dynamic in situations. It's about experiencing feeling and exercising authority - really it's knowing yourself and accepting that".

(Pub after class, Jean, 30.5.73)

It is interesting that these views equate in principle with the view of the Course expressed by a member of staff in a review at the end of the term.

"The problem is that the Course wishes to give experiential learning. The thing is not learned until you make it your own. It's difficult to know how much planning facilitates this.

Everything is a surprise anyway. When you get to the bit it's not what you think it is going to be. Let's take it as read that a framework is helpful, the problem is how to maximise the learning which includes fifty different people at different stages".

(Course Review for students, fieldteachers and tutors, 6.6.73)

Suffice/...

Suffice it to say that the end of term was marked by a co-operative sharing of concerns in the review, coupled with attempts to draw the staff out of role now that the Course was ending. Staff resisted this, but the heat had gone out of the struggle. There was general agreement about what was important and a settling for standards and ideas about content generally as a basis for the exams. Within this broad spectrum of change activity over the year similar stages on a shorter time scale were characteristic of the preoccupations with exams and jobs. I will illumine each briefly.

Managing Examinations

Exams first raised their head in the first week of term and in the shape of the situational study were regular topics for public conversation. Is it possible to identify a similar process of change activity as the students sought to face, prepare for and manage this hurdle? I think it is, and the attempt follows. The characteristic of the initial stage of the process was an exploration of the reality of the idea. It was not, somehow, quite believable that the course would take exams seriously. This provided some temporary reassurance to students who were not sure how seriously they were wanting to take the idea, nor how prepared they were to do so. High anxiety was evident in these beginning explorations, which had a testing out quality and were often not pursued by the group in the first instance. For example:

"Pam/...

"Pam raised the problem of exams. It seemed so soon after Easter to be having to face them. It was all too much. The group fell silent. She avoided my question about what she was beginning to do about them and Helen interrupted to tell about staff appointments in an agency they both knew". (Canteen, coffee, Eleanor, Pam, Alys, Jean and Lynn, 18.4.73)

"Linda said she was worried about exams and reading. She felt she hadn't done enough.

"I've just read one book on family group interviewing for social work method. I'm not getting through the books at all" this fell into silence Sheelagh began to talk about jobs, the others joined in". (Tea, canteen, Sheelagh, Lynn, Linda, et al. 18.4.73)

Beginning exploration of the reality with staff was also evident.

"Sheelagh asked "how much do exams really count?"

The tutor said she wasn't really sure, there were four main areas of assessment - the exams, the oral, the ~~s~~ituational study and fieldwork.

Questions about marking and the mark allocation in the oral followed. The questions seemed to say "surely this isn't all that serious" - the group lingered on and seemed reluctant to finish the meeting or to close the subject". (Discussion at end of social work method group 1.5.73)

The/...

The philosophy of the Course was called into question at this stage. There was a strong feeling that the Course ought not to have exams, they were not consistent with Course values and the emphasis on the individuality of learning.

"It's all so permissive, you go through at your own pace and then bump the exams are there just the same. Questions were asked about the procedures, they really were proper exams? Really they should not have to take them". (Tea, canteen, Lynn, Joyce, Jean 17.4.73)

Disbelief too that tutors could really bother about marks and the niceties of the procedure, it was so alien to what they'd experienced so far it was hardly credible.

Inevitably too this initial phase contained much comparison of previous experience. Students who had good exam records explored the difference this exam would raise, doubting their competence. Those who had poorer records bewailed them and wondered whether there was anything about these exams which could be an improvement. By the first week in May the initial testing of the water was over and ~~the~~ the business of comparing, identifying norms and beliefs about the process, and of mutual support was in full swing.

"Anna said she's a problem. She'd always worked for exams in the last three weeks before, you could get an Honours degree for 16 days work if you had the system taped properly. "I hate exams/...

"exams but I feel I've mastered them, that is until now". This lot she reckoned were different in some undefinable way, they included what you knew about how to do social work, she wasn't very sure about that". (Tea, canteen, Carol, Anna and Pen, 1.5.73)

Do people fail? was a common question at this point. The answer was yes, sometimes. To sum up the initial phase. It was one of rather dependent exploration of the reality of the idea. Exploration, testing out, examining the principles and procedures involved, and comparison of past success with current expectations were the central activities.

The second phase of 'dealing with exams' was characterised by rejection of the idea expressed in two main ways. Firstly by wishing them away, and focusing attention on the end of the Course and the beginning of work, and secondly by an angry denial of their validity as a process. Phrases like "I wish it were all over", "the last lap now", "I keep thinking of the end", were common expressions as the enormity of gearing up for the exams was discussed. Reality was banished and it sometimes felt as if the Course was really over. The angry denial, which marked the end of the phase and a generalised flap about the impending event sounds familiar. It was, however, the first time students as a group actually asked me to record there and then for posterity!

" "Gill, you must write this down". Exams are/...

"are not fitting at the end of a Course like this. They are inconsistent with previous experience. "I can't believe they'll really count marks, it can't be done that way", interrupted Joyce. Tutors have been giving different messages about the importance of the exams anyway - whether it's theory or practice that counts. "What had been important was growth, an integration for me", said Lynn. Exams were wrong, bad, quite inconsistent - had I got all that"?" (Lynn, Joyce, Sheelagh, Pip, Jean, Linda, Tea, Canteen 16.6.73)

Inherent within this phase was too the beginning of co-operative activity in relation to the exams. This occurred in relation to the amount and nature of reading, discussion of past exam papers, and pressure on the staff to produce a list of exam topics to provide some guidelines. Co-operation occurred too in the business of deciding on a Situational Study. There was a generalised and mounting sense of pressure and indirect anger expressed by non-attendance at classes. The shortage of books which were passed from one to another both contributed to and provided a basis for deciding what and how much it was desirable to read and group norms in this regard became clearer.

In brief this phase provided for a rejection of the validity of the proceeding together with a strengthening of the sense of group cohesion in adversity, and by the establishment/...

establishment within the group of 'rules' to ensure success. These 'rules' related to understanding the process, establishing how much reading would do, and seeking for 'cues' from the management as to ways of achieving necessary levels. It seemed that the achievement of this stage enabled individuals to settle for their own programmes of study and to 'opt out' of the group to further their own purposes.

The third part of the process was concerned with direct task focused effort. Students had evidently decided on the 'cues' they wished to follow, had selected areas for concentration, and submitted their situational studies with which most expressed satisfaction. Some worked co-operatively in flats or alone at home. The library was jammed, all thirteen places full, and the air was one of industry and mutual anxiety. Public conversation was minimal and as the normal rhythm of term had ended not available in the same patterns as before. Evaluative activity was evident in the conversation I did join - it seemed that part of settling down to focused work, 'settling for' what was to be done, involved once more ~~processes~~ processes of self examination and evaluation of total learning. Students described themselves as "needing another Course" or "just beginning to know what it's all about". It was, in short, a 'settling for' certain areas of knowledge, acceptance of what might be 'good enough', and of preparation for the experience itself.

It/...

It seemed that the exams themselves provided the final phase of the activity. Students exhibited some anxiety but there was a general sense of independent purpose. Evaluation of the papers before the results were known was balanced and the papers were reckoned to be 'fair', 'not bad', and those students I met mostly evaluated their own performances positively. The orals provided for heightened anxiety, but were coped with with independence and mutually supportive behaviour.

"This is a far far better thing I do, than I have ever done before" said a student, (previously very uncertain about the Course and the exam process) as he left the library for the oral".

(Fieldnotes 6.73)

To summarise then. The process by which the students coped with the pressures of the exams exhibited similar characteristics in the short term to the total change process of the academic year. A phase of dependent exploration and fact finding was followed by one of rejection together with the beginnings of joint/group activity as the students worked on the matter. The third phase ~~was~~ characterised by purposeful individual work, both alone and in conjunction with others on the basis of the agreed norms and rules. The final stage, embodied in the process of getting to, taking, and evaluating the exams, contained greater elements of personal certainty, evaluative activity and independent functioning. Perhaps I should add that all students except/...

except one passed the exam:

Jobs

The third key preoccupation to which I referred was that of finding a job. This process went on parallel with the other two already described though only the earlier phases of the activity occurred with the term. Notably these were activities concerned with beginning to consider jobs and/or the implications of returning to seconding authorities - often felt to be difficult or limiting at this point. Whether students could face the realities and limitations of the normal local authority department was a concern, some wanting to opt for less conventional ways of putting their training to use. Again exploration of opportunities coupled with joint group sharing of people's positions was a significant activity - and at times provided a 'way out' from the pressure of the term itself.

Negative attitudes to work or retreat from the activity of job hunting were not evident on any scale. Perhaps a more critical evaluation of job opportunities was common, certainly much time was spent in joint exploration of possibilities and much information about local agencies was shared. Once, however, job application became the focus there was again a more individualised and at times competitive approach which cut down public conversation. If students who knew each other or were friends were vying for places in local agencies there tended to be less public discussion of that activity. Students/...

Students took keen interest in each others problems and choices, and those who had chosen early or were seconded took back seats in these discussions. The acceptance of a job which provided confirmation of self in the new role ended this phase but this had not become a general state by the end of term. Rather the general activity was a mix of stages two and three and the subject a major one for public conversation.

In short the students had three key areas for activity and work in this term. Fieldwork placements, exams, and job hunting. Similar processes were evident in each area. Change activity was seen to have in each situation four main phases. A dependent often initially isolated testing out and exploring of a situation, a rejecting or hostile phase associated with the beginning of co-operative group activity, a 'settling for' phase when the student developed a more task centred and personally responsible set of activities, and a final ending or operational phase which recognised limits, strengths and interdependence.

The Supervisors' World

The pattern of interaction between supervisors and Course continued in a by now familiar pattern. The primary work was concerned with, and dominated by, the structure and patterns of the term. In other words the focus for the supervisors was that of coping with, and enabling the students to cope with, the exams and Course expectations./...

expectations. I will deal first with this section of the data, the overwhelming part recorded. It is characterised by a dropping in temperature, by greater co-operation, by agreement and achievement of greater certainty about what the Course was about. It seemed that co-operation and greater mutual certainty were aims interestingly pursued and to some extent achieved in this phase. I will deal briefly later with the second level of activity, the administrative links between Course and field and the activity of the Policy and Administration Committee.

Firstly then the main work of the supervisors in this term. What characterised it and what was the nature of the process? Interestingly it once again mirrored that of the student world as the teaching aspects of the learning process were struggled with and identified - identified in ways which were close to the terms used by the students themselves. There are four phases in the supervisors' work with the Course in this term. They were:

1. Concern with the necessity for working together in the avoidance of 'splitting' of the student experience.
2. Feeling response to student rejection and 'settling in' processes.
3. Identification of the teaching/learning task for the term as the students increase in professional identification.

4./...

4. Supervisors' role in the sought outcome - which is recognised with some certainty in this phase. In other words the process was concerned with the educational and organisational aspects of the student process of "settling in", "settling for", IT and the increased sense of professional identity and certainty which ensued. It was also characterised by a similar diminution in tension and conflict, this being replaced by a need and desire for co-operation in joint enterprise.

The Search for Integration

To turn then to the first phase, the avoidance of 'splitting' between Course and field, and the necessity for working together. This coincided with the 'settling in' phase for the students, and here preoccupations about standards and assessment were paramount. Were students as far on as they should be, had they gone back in the process of placement changeover, and how would the goal of the successful completion of the exam procedures ever be achieved? Central to this concern was the old one about the nature of social work, or at least of the social worker the Course was aiming to produce, coupled with a greater realisation and perhaps acceptance of the complexity of the social work education process. A common way of dealing with this difficulty and of testing the wind as it were, was to focus on the difficulties of a specific student. In this way general difficulties or stages were clarified and a good deal of mutual support generated. For not only students were being evaluated/...

evaluated, or so it felt.

"Are you doing well or badly if you produce a problem? In the pattern of previous years you felt that if you didn't produce a big problem you probably weren't aware enough of the students' difficulties, if you did produce one you weren't doing very well".

(Supervisor describing own anxiety at meeting 19.4.73)

And evaluated on what criteria? The struggle was to identify the positives which each student brought and to see whether these were attributes which this Course could really value. Particularly where these skills were in the areas of organisation and administration the perplexity grew as to whether a Course which placed a high value on individual interactions in the therapeutic sense could accept students with differing gifts. The old problems about therapy reared their heads as the students' capacities and ways of functioning failed to coincide with the assumptive expectations of the supervisor - what was legitimate pass standard practice?

Another way commonly used was the attempt to identify the characteristics of the 'ideal' potential student so that the present could be evaluated in the light of these 'ideal' expectations.

"Concern for and recognition of the individual
.... there is danger of losing the individual
in the fashionable concern for minority groups".

"Changing/...

"Changing society and losing sight of the individual you need a sense of guilt which has led to care for people".

"Some students now are too preoccupied with the material things, the individual is lost, one must 'do' and inject energy and they 'don't know any better".

"They need an awareness of their own needs and motivation for social work; to understand their own values and how these came to be formed and relate these to social work values".

"The mass media is a problem. It keeps being conveyed that half the changes that come about are achieved by being outspoken and concerned 'out there' rather than looking at themselves"....

"It seems to me that this sort of thing has dangers just as the individual thing can we endow people with the opportunities we've had at the micro end an awareness of one's own disability, we are most omnipotent and need humility. The danger for us is that we forget people can be helped in the mass Social work has to be in the middle, aware of both possibilities".

(Extract from Supervisors' Meeting 25.4.73)

"When you discuss the breadth of social work, and the number and kinds of people you need, it's daunting". (Supervisors' Meeting 25.4.73)

Nevertheless it is interesting that these kinds of conversations/...

conversations encompassed more clearly ideas of Course value and the acknowledgement of differences. That related to the main work of the phase, the identifying of the main agreed characteristics of the 'pass' students, and the boundaries which the Course might place to that definition. In this activity the integrating of Course and field perspectives become an important idea, perhaps as a response to the impending exam situation which required just such an integration, but responsive too perhaps to the students increasing attempt to relate and make sense of the two together. For supervisors were not alone in the anxieties about evaluation. Tutors too began to express unease and for new staff especially there was a good deal of evident anxiety.

"I feel like I'm in the doldrums. A sort of mid term slump".

"There is a slump after Easter, the recognition that the exams are nearly here, and the Course is not going to last for ever. Help, what are we going to do, I pick that up"

"A sense of panic, in class one does so little, in ~~tutor~~ials I wonder if they are picking up what goes on around them as people are they learning anything from the Course?"

"The realisation that it depends on what you are and how you use yourself. A movement away from the mass identity - you can't compare yourself with 49 other people"

"I/...

"I am frightened that my students are not very good on paper can they muddle through without any hard conceptual thinking?"

(Tutors and Supervisors talking at meeting 3.5.73)

Inherent in this extract, as in much else at the time, was the idea of putting both ends of the experience together, and of at least 'touching on' the possibility of conflicting demands and expectations. The polarities of individual v. community, practice v. theory, have to be reconciled in the interests of the achievement of an approximate rational whole - which can be achieved only in the person of the student. So 'splitting' must be dealt with and became an inevitable focus for staff anxiety. 'Splitting' defined as "playing one off against the other", "putting emphasis on one aspect as opposed to the other", must be defeated if integration is to be achieved. The key activities then are to identify either positively or negatively, ideally or unacceptably, the characteristics of the sought for student and to deal thus with the anxieties about evaluation inherent in the timing of the Course and the urgent necessity for 'integration'.

Second came the feeling response to the sense of rejection experienced as the students 'settled in' to placements. It was, as on occasions before, first experienced as a 'haggle' between tutors and supervisors about something else - the organisational plans for timetabling in the year ahead:

"Supervisor/...

"Supervisor A: "Some of my anger in this discussion is about something else. It's about the students hating the agency just now - nothing is positive - and I feel anger about this".

Tutor: "About the bittiness?" (Of this year's Programme).

Supervisor A: "The students are so bolshy, it relates partly to the planning and their feelings just now".

Tutor: "Next year it will be better"

Supervisors commence to haggle again about dates, I sit wondering what the fight is really about

Supervisor B: "I'd like to know more about what is going on on the Course now, the Group Experience for example. I'm getting angry, all this talk about next year"

The group struggle on through a description of the Group Experience, the tutor upholding it, the supervisor questioning its timing, potential for learning or damage, its elective nature - an element of fight is clear in every stage they return to the students' learning.

Supervisor C: "You have to get over your own feelings of inadequacy and resentment"

Supervisor A: "Like with my student, I can't do anything with it, she just jars with where I am".

Tutor: "One has this experience with students".

Supervisor B: "Mine is cross with me, but can't share/...

"share this yet"

A case is described in which a student gets angry with good effect with a client - this was how the client and student learned they both cared.

Supervisor A: "I am conscious of withholding. I just got fed up and put on pressure, she was feeling vulnerable, all the anger and bad feeling came out, I tried to work with it, maybe its better now, there's value in being angry, some of it was mine too".

Tutor: "You can only use anger constructively if you are in touch with your love, do we get angry with people if we don't care?"

Supervisor C: "I think it's dangerous, you can misplace anger"

Supervisor D: "I got angry over a period, I realised it and used it, now things feel more appropriate. If you can be sure, then feel angry and express it.

Supervisor E: "I'm not sure I can control my anger as much as that".

Supervisor B: "Interesting we always feel so apologetic about it. All saying it without demonstrating angry feelings"

Tutor (getting up to leave): "I am not leaving angrily. I have to introduce a class".

(Supervisors' Meeting 9.5.73)

Similar feelings and anxieties reared their heads a week later/...

later in the second group I attended - this time expressed by one member with increasing exasperation and keen group interest.

"I am getting angry with the view that I should stick purely to the educational task and I just don't believe this is possible. I think there is another step to go"

A fight flares about the boundaries of therapeutic v. educational intervention, the supervisors siding against the tutors who attempt a rational reasonable approach, perhaps help might come from outside:

"I'm very angry, and angry with the tutor too for blocking me I've been moaning in this group for three weeks, I'd better get on myself"

Tutor: "Moaning is a good thing - and the support is correspondingly great".

"Explodes" - "Everyone says isn't - sensitive, but - never says "Boo to a goose" or gets on with it - (The other student) drives everyone up the pole The meeting switched somewhat hurriedly to talk about programme planning for next year, and a fine old haggle developed about that".

(Supervisors' Meeting 17.5.73)

Clearly emerging in this material is the response to the student task of "settling in" and "for" the placement experience, as well as the sense of responsibility for enabling effective change. Feelings, strongly aroused by/...

by the student interaction were sufficiently commonly felt to affect significantly the Course/field interaction in this brief phase, before as in the student world, vanishing as a focus for attention.

The third phase was primarily concerned with identification of the teaching/learning task and matched interestingly the students' developing and widening awareness of professional identity. In this the role of the student in the agency was crucial, as was the culture and opportunity through which different agencies mediated social work values and practice to the students. While students valued and commented on opportunities made freely or otherwise available, staff mused about the dilemmas which the presence of students created for them, and the 'irritant' role which students often unwittingly played. Differences in the value placed on on-going learning in different agencies highlighted differing opportunities and ways of developing as a social worker, therefore, providing differing models for students. Agencies as well as supervisors experienced evident threat as the students moved into this phase. For the students' attempt to identify more closely as individuals with social work raised yet once again the supervisors' uncertainties - what is central social work learning? Concepts such as task, identity and growth, emerged from a welter of differing agency experiences and ways of thinking: there seemed on the one hand an increasing sense/...

sense of the acceptance of difference, on the other a need for firm statements - which when made seem to have little meaning as their basis was unclear.

"Supervisor: "Enabling in work and in supervision, that creates a framework in which people can grow"

Tutor: "The only thing is the task - everything else is such a morass of fantasies, myths etc."

Supervisor: "That denies the knowledge behind it and using that depends on the person".

The group get lost exploring this idea.

Tutor: "The only thing I find enabling is holding to task the only neutral objective thing in a whole range of uncertainties".

Supervisor B: "This must be interesting when it comes to marking exam papers. Students start and end at different places. Is there a standard? Or is the standard the students' progress?"

(Supervisors' Meeting 25.5.73)

Awareness of the change aspects of the social work relationship was seen as central, as was the question of objective and identity by both groups. For example:

"It's important for them to try and come off this Course with some sort of social work identity. It's less important that they should for example, have a good relationship with a doctor than that they should know how to approach other people who have a job to do Find out what the purpose is, your task, and find what you can do about it. I can't stand if the students are not interested in finding that they have some method/...

"method. What they can do is important".

"I wonder whether there is some sort of principle about how to get on in any setting. This means becoming aware of how these other people view you".

"I think we are asking for a lot of maturity that they can put aside whether they are liked or not - a vulnerable position and difficult for students".

The acceptance of difference and of separateness from the group is further identified as important, but once again the group bogs down in the breadth and complexity of the range of social work. They end by acknowledging that standards were an easier matter 3-4 years ago". (Supervisors meeting 31.5.73)

The hall marks of these conversations were the acceptance both of difference and of the complexity of the task.

The emphasis, however, was on the individual student and his or her capacity as a person to make sufficient sense of the complexity. The battle between Course and field about who knows what seems to have achieved a truce and the sense of joint working and of searching for clarity was greater.

Finally the emphasis was on the role of the supervisor in relation to the evaluation process. Was the supervisor a central part of the procedure, and how was her report and contribution used? Was fieldwork in any sense part of the actual examination? There was within the Course considerable variety of practice and opinion on this issue, some taking the opportunity of doing full scale pre-exam/...

pre-exam assessments with students in placement. The rationale for this approach had three main features.

1. It gave explicit value to experiential learning at a crucial point in the Course.
2. It gave the student hopefully positive feedback which provided a strong basis for exam performance.
3. It helped the student to cope with the anxiety of the exam situation if they knew 'where they stood' in the fieldwork component.

Others did not take this view. They felt, with some justification, that the fieldwork report was not used by the external examiner, that the placement was not over, and that it might not be in the students' interests to prejudge the issue. There was no overall policy so people did as they wished or felt. It seemed within these lengthy discussions that the emphasis on clarifying the relationship of one part of the Course to another was yet a further way of attempting integration and the banishment of anxiety. Distinction or no distinction, pass or fail, standard or no standard, the debate seemed endless, yet through and out of it appeared some greater certainty.

"It's about seeing how it (the fieldwork part) complements the whole, if it does. Looking back, have you reached the stage that you can make some sense of the experience you are having A value in being able to see and say this ... the putting together of your feeling and your intellectual/...

"intellectual part

"your libidinal child is happy".

(Supervisors' Meeting 6.6.73)

This making sense, and putting together, began to be more firmly defined as the exams approached. Uncertainty, whilst held as an integral part of the performance began to be held in some balance as the final time of reckoning drew near. Pushed, staff began to be clearer about their view of the essentials.

"It's a question of being able to function in a job, and of some commitment to that".

Tutor A: "To show the beginning of being able to do at this point in time".

Tutor B: "We have to turn people out who will not do damage to clients, and maintain the validity of the qualification. If we turn out people with preponderant personal needs we are giving a mixed message, the personal maturity thing. We all have needs but if the student is not reliable, dependable, in touch with self, then should not qualify. On the learning practice side if the student feels free to act and disagree in situations this is important. We are talking about the 'good enough' beginning social worker".

(Supervisors' meeting 14.6.73)

It might well be asked what did emerge as the constituents of the 'good enough' social worker? Briefly he or she could be summed up as having :

a/...

a capacity to relate positively to others.

sufficient personal maturity to see other people as separate, to allow their otherness, to allow difference.

self awareness to the extent of being in touch with and capable of expressing personal feelings. able to demonstrate responsibility, dependability and commitment.

sufficient knowledge and skill to assess situations if not always to act in them.

ability to think imaginatively and freshly in situations.

ability to recognise when needing further help.

the capacity to function within an organisation and to understand its function and the opportunities/ limitations which this created/imposed on work and thought.

Alongside this greater clarity about expected standard grew dawning awareness that the students were making progress.

"My students are just getting some grasp, some security in what they know".

"My student has a good grasp of what is going on around her, I'm hoping her skill will mature in the six weeks after the exams".

"My student is beginning to feel positively about the agency - she is gaining an acceptance of the concept of the inner world, I hope she is going to/...

"to consolidate this".

(Supervisors' Meeting 14.6.73)

To sum up this phase, the administrative preoccupation with the supervisors' role in the exam situation provided a focus for discussion of the integrated nature of the Course experience and of the essential interweaving of theory and practice. Characteristic of the pre-exam stage was the greater certainty of staff about required standards and present progress, though already these were being beset by feelings about endings and role change.

It will be seen from this section that the field-teachers were responding and thinking within a similar phase to that of the students; that the two had a substantial relationship to each other; and that the primary task was to work together to achieve integration.

Administrative Interaction

The pattern here remained largely unchanged. The Policy and Administration Committee continued to accept three representatives from the supervisors' group which met monthly. The dilemmas inherent in this arrangement continued to be evident - the supervisors struggling to define their role at this level, the Course staff clearly ambivalent at a not too conscious level about the interaction, the feedback of information from one part of the system to the other very poor indeed. As before this related partly to the complexity of the issues raised at the Policy and Administration Committee with which field staff were not necessarily familiar, and partly to/...

to the feelings generated by the tensions and conflicts within the staff group, as it somehow felt disloyal to be too explicit about these.

It is of interest, however, that the level of conflict here died away too. The preoccupation of the fieldteachers became the avoidance of 'splitting' between Course and field, the search for unity and co-operation was evident here also. In an attempt to 'beat the system' suggestions were made about administrative matters which might help the problems - the exchange of minutes, the regular invitation of particular tutors to meetings of all supervisors, the identification of areas of content which it would be helpful to explore. The avoidance of an alternative curriculum was necessary and this involved planning on the part of the field as well as Course staff.

So here too unity and hope for next year were more evident. There was minimum investment in fight, and the overall purpose was to achieve the 'working together' felt to be necessary yet so mysteriously elusive in reality.

The Tutors' World

The data generated in this phase is disappointingly scrappy but gives regular glimpses of old conflicts and familiar dynamics. It would be good to be able to say that there had been a 'resolution' within this group but facing major leadership loss and change this was perhaps an unreal expectation. The long term nature of working relationships/...

relationships in this group together with the management responsibilities shared consensually made for ongoing strife and the expectation of little relief. As before explanations of what was happening were regularly given in terms of personal relationships, idiosyncrasies and the absence of trust.

Organisationally the problem of the large group trying to function informally as a small one continued to dog the staff's work. It was evident particularly at Policy and Administration Committee meetings that the 'as if' syndrome was rife. Plans for the carrying on of the department's work in a range of areas, such as selection, were made with a high commitment to the informal individualised approach, and with scant regard for the management aspects of the tasks. It, somehow, was not believable, nor important, that a different form of organisation might be more appropriate - and plans made regularly fell down as a consequence of the lack of planned strategy. Failure or criticism was in turn experienced acutely as mistrust and the cycle repeated.

Intra as well as inter group communication posed difficulties. Questions, of taught content, teaching difficulties, and uncertainty about standards especially with regard to exams created anxieties, particularly for new staff. It was not only that staff experienced difficulty in informing field staff, they found real problems in keeping each other informed about the day to day realities and tasks. Communication with field staff regularly/...

regularly reminded me of an "inter-group exercise" where the lessons were not learned, yet the staff felt pressed, alone, and coming up to the 'crunch' point of the year with little support from the field.

"She said that the problem was she didn't know what X or Y thought, she had real problems in communicating with them, "maybe I just haven't tried hard enough"

Speaking of the meeting we had just attended (of the Policy and Administration Committee) she commented "Whew! that was awful but I'm glad the anger between the groups was faced - people had to carry their own - the dynamic reminded her of Miller & Rice, an inter-group experience.

"Tutors don't get much support from anywhere, they are supposed to carry the can, and this is often very difficult - she didn't think field colleagues realised the amount they (the tutors) had to carry".

(After meeting, tutor talking 3.5.73)

Hence plans for the exams, and the organisation of these, selection questions, and departmental long term goals created strife and tension as the group struggled with minimum structure to achieve consensus in the face of departing leadership and an unknown future. Familiar defenses and roles were assumed and the old pattern of stress, fighting and tears remained endemic. ..

Yet amidst this taut group there emerged too hopes for and pressures towards change, a better future. Sought goals/...

goals were more democracy and open leadership, clearer role definitions and task allocations, relevant allowance of each other's authority, better decision making.

"I'd like us to give some thought to our organisational problems we are a rich staff in the skills that we have, a tremendous potential to ^{make} the department a dynamic one where there will be satisfactions for staff and students. Not to create the receipt for stalemate - to organise to resist stalemate. Can we look to the future with hope? Can we allow many flowers to blossom, even if they can't all have the same smell?" (Policy and Administration Committee 11.6.73)

Here then was a reflection of the student stage, the search for individuality, for the acceptance of difference, for a realistic appreciation of the job to be accomplished.

To conclude, the sense of stress and tension for the staff group remained high, though even here there were attempts to break out, to resolve old dilemmas. Lacking new leadership, and uncertain of the future, however, it is not surprising that the old pattern, continued to perplex both staff and field colleagues.

Summary

This chapter has identified a further stage in the student learning process, one in which the movement was towards a merging of self and situation, of self in role, and of a developing sense of professional identity. The framework/...

framework of the term, ending as it did with examinations, provided a time span and structure for the phase which was characterised by co-operative activity, the achievement of a sense of mutual staff/student goals and the diminution of conflict. Supervisor/tutor data reflected closely this process and the level of conflict evaporated here too in the search for integration and joint shared purpose. Difficult ongoing staff relationships continued to be seen in personal as opposed to organisational terms though there was some bid to change, some attempt to work for a more hopeful future. The aspects of this phase are outlined in the chart.

Third Term

<u>Student</u>	"Settling in" and "for" placement
<u>Learning</u>	experience
<u>Phase</u>	Integration of self and situation
	More independent and professionally identified functioning

Course

Framework

Students	High Change Expectations
Fieldteachers	Medium Change Expectations
Tutors	Medium Change Expectations

Tasks

Students	<p>Finding appropriate role in agency - improving practice, creating positive working relationships, integration of theory and practice.</p> <p>Exploring, identifying necessary work, co-operative and individual activity regarding exams.</p> <p>Exploring, clarifying job opportunities and ideas.</p> <p>Accepting the beginning of ending essential to the above.</p>
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Fieldteachers	Working together, avoidance of 'splitting' in student experience. Identifying and coping with feeling responses to student "settling in" activity. Identification of the characteristics of the 'good enough' social worker, the essentials of the social work task. Identifying their role in the joint evaluative activity.
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Tutors	Mounting exams. Holding anxiety and feeling. Identifying joint teaching task with field. Long term planning
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Communication Mode	Co-operative, Integrative, Reduction of Conflict
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CHAPTER IX

Chapter IX - Endings and Reparation

"What I feel is aware of a change in the year, nearer to being a social worker than at the beginning - I certainly talk more like one - its happened to each of us".

(Student talking in Course Review 13.8.73)

Ending means separation. This short chapter is concerned with the struggle to end. Social work is notoriously bad at considering the implications of ending for its enterprises at least as evidenced by the paucity of literature on endings for clients and workers. The attempt here is to identify how the process was handled, what was important about it for students and staff, and to examine the stages through which all groups passed in achieving separation. For the way ending is handled will confirm or fail to confirm, the achievements, standards and aspirations of the student group; a group of increasingly independently minded young social workers seeking legitimation and value at the end of the Course.

The framework for this final stage is quite different from that of previous phases, the data consequently significantly reduced in quantity. Nevertheless it seemed important to outline the central activities and preoccupations of all groups as they sought to end.

The period concerned is six weeks. The time was spent full time in agency practice, and contact with the University was limited to tutors' visits and to one weekly seminar organised by the students for themselves which/...

which approximately two thirds of the student group attended. A final day of meetings with staff, which included speakers from B.A.S.W. and C.C.E.T.S.W. plus a Course review, ended the period. The regular pattern of staff/field meetings continued throughout this period, as did the usual meetings of an administrative nature. Staff spent some time in the department, visited agencies, offered some tutorials, and worked at home. Data, therefore, was generated through student contact one day per week, in regular meetings between field and course, and in informal staff interactions.

Researchwise it was an easy more relaxed time. Students and staff talked frankly in established relationship with me. Students who had not 'risked me' until the final phase did so. It seemed that part of ending was dealing with me, clarifying my purpose, what I would do with my material etc., and identifying something of the meaning of the relationships I had made. Value was given and shared, and my purposes reclarified through exchange.

The Students' World

This was a phase concerned with increasing independence, with evaluative activity prior to leaving, with 'tying up' loose ends and achieving consensus about pass/fail issues, and with a shift in role towards that of worker. Inherent in this move were strong bids for recognition of individual worth from staff, for more reciprocal roles, and for free open discussion of Course values and difficulties. To leave/...

leave the past had to be made good, and much energy was invested in reparative activity vis a vis the Course - in suggestions, in diagnosis of its ills etc. - seen as a parting constructive gesture. Feelings commonly associated with separation were around too - mourning, a sense of loss, anxiety about the future, questions about the meaning of the experience, and anger. Finally it was a co-operative positive time for exchange in a final search for consensus before ending.

The primary task then was ending. As an idea it had been round, as I have indicated in the previous chapter, for some time. Around though in private conversation rather than as something that was part of the group's public activity. For example:

"I have a sense of pain about the Course ending, I'm not ready for this. How will I manage outside without a protective supervisor?"

(Student, over tea in student union, 22.5.73)

Anxiety about ending occurred in an increasing number of individual contacts throughout the second half of the summer term. Not yet public, yet coinciding with the increased sense of purpose in becoming professional, the idea usually had some constituent of fear within it. Fear of the demands to be made on the self in the outside world.

Within the final six week phase the emphasis was different.

1. The fact of ending was often accompanied by actions or/...

or feelings which spoke of facing the reality of the issue..

2. Feelings of loss and mourning were more openly acknowledged and shared in public.

The process took as its focus a range of 'tidying up' activities which in different ways accentuated and crystallised the business of leaving. Some examples:

"I'm just bringing back some books to the library - just imagine not going to University next year, the end of six years".

(Pip in street 11.7.73)

"Have you finished your research task yet?"

(A query about a piece of written work, non examinable, which had been very unclear all year) "Help I must think of something",

Jean said. Lynn volunteered that she was doing something about psychiatry, looking up lots of abstracts, she thought she'd get by.

Two others said they'd done a project in placement and were writing that up - there was a good deal of confusion and ideas about how much would do, of what sort, and for when.

"We have to get finished up".

(Students talking in pub, 25.7.73)

'Tying up' ends had another important constituent, the handling of the examinations and the failure of one member. Familiar processes were evident in this connection as students evaluated their own performance, compared/...

compared notes and experiences, particularly about the orals which had been difficult for some, and decided that the event had been "fair". The acceptance of this provided a basis for judging the failure of the one member. For perhaps obvious reasons I do not plan to expand here, but merely to point up the dilemma. The students' job seemed to be to legitimate their own experiences, and, in accepting these as fair, to deal with failure. They were torn between concern for a colleague; (seen in extensive discussion and attempts to indicate and identify what went wrong, in both personal and work orientated terms) yet if their own credentials were to be validated, to find that failure valid and also acceptable. In other words there was a sense in which failure had to be the right solution.

Inherent in the 'tying up' stage was also the idea of strong and ambivalent feelings.

"I'm feeling very down, quite anxious. It's leaving people I know very well, my supervisor, you, Jean, I'm not sure how I'll manage. I suppose it's mourning. She looked lost and rather sad." (Lynn talking on the pavement after drinks in the pub 11.7.73)

"I'm feeling more ready to finish, looking forward to life in the big outside".

(Students chatting before seminar 11.7.73)

Jobs, the reality of the outside world, provided another key focus in this phase, and much time and energy was spent/...

spent in this area. Providing a vehicle for looking ahead, as well as a reflective opportunity in connection with readiness, they flourished in conversation.

"Partly I'm mourning, feeling sad about ending. I'm still looking for a job" - some possibilities were described. "I start work in mid September, it's hard to imagine myself at work, I'm having a good holiday first", John added they fell to talking generally about the Course, the shortage of men, what would happen in the final review that afternoon - they didn't quite know what would happen".

(Group of students talking during pub lunch 13.8.73)

Essential too to the idea of ending was a desire for some role shift in relations with staff. This area was widely discussed and the focus for pained often angry feelings. Somehow they had to be acknowledged as individuals, people, not students just, by the staff. This seemed an integral part of becoming a professional, an independently functioning social worker, and it was this confirmation that was now sought.

The business of altering staff/student relations was characteristically dealt with in two ways. Firstly by a recalling of the communication difficulties experienced throughout the year, and secondly by activity designed to bring about change. Parties, and one in particular, given by a staff member, who "let down her hair" and people "stayed all night", were the focus of much involved discussion, /...

discussion, in particular of the interaction between staff and students which took place then. In the larger group situation energy was invested in attempting to alter the structure of the end of term Course review to allow not just for a student review, but for them as independent people to make a contribution - to make 'better' the Course for the next year. Recalling past difficulties in the context of ending students felt that the structure of the Course inhibited communication between themselves and staff who were not felt to be 'real' to students. They needed to be more available than had been the case this year. The question of christian names was important, again the search for individual recognition as a professional person. Supervisors were seen as sharing the perception of students.

"they are perplexed too about the vagaries of the staff" who were then described as aloof, unwilling to mix, unwilling to communicate or to socialise.

(Student Meeting 8.8.73)

Attempting to alter this balance was important. is Achieved to a limited extent in party situations.

"It was a party for her social work method group, they consumed a lot of drink; there was very intense discussion, went on until 7:30 a.m., mostly people seemed to be putting to rights impressions of each other - that was specially true/...

"true of X (the tutor) and one of the group."

(Students talking in pub, 11.7.73)

It was more difficult to achieve in the formal Course situation itself. An interesting attempt did occur which highlighted the dilemma for staff and students alike.

"The students called a meeting to plan how to contribute constructively to the final review. They wanted more order than on previous occasions not just another 'happening'. They reached agreement to send delegates to the staff to try to achieve some joint staff/student planning for the event. The delegates returned to the meeting angry "We were told that it is the third in a series, that it's the process that is important, that it's a learning experience".

Their sensible (to them) suggestions about finding a joint way to discuss change for next year were rejected staff were angrily described as aloof and distant - when what seemed wanted was warm, nice co-operative people. They would organise the meeting to suit themselves - there was a clear difference in purpose between them and the staff. (Student Meeting 8.8.73)

In essence it seemed that the students were wanting recognition of role shift, as co-professionals jointly contributing to the future, together with an opportunity to/...

to engage in some reparative activity; to make the future better, perhaps even to ensure its continuance through diagnosis of the current central difficulties. Staff on the other hand, were still busy contributing to learning, upholding their authority, and facing change in a different dimension. Not role change as such, but leadership change, and there may have been some investment in the maintenance of the status quo in the avoidance of the future. That is my speculation, but the separate perspectives, those of the reparative leavers, and the ongoing staff group, were clearly evident in the review as the total group sought for some consensus, some agreed basis upon which to end.

Some comment on the review, as the final event of the Course, is necessary. It was attended by all students (48), all staff (8), and some supervisors (16), a total of seventy ~~two~~ people. Its purpose was not defined except as within the name, and the initiative was taken by the students from the word 'go'.

"The meeting was declared open. Jean said at once "on behalf of the students and supervisors - can we discuss Course content rather than process - new methods are needed, and since we have been at the receiving end we can contribute"."

She received sufficient support from others for the meeting to proceed on this basis. The meeting was characterised by the openness and directness with which students discussed with each other and with staff, by the constructive nature of/...

of the contributions and by the ongoing search for a solution to the staff/student relationship dilemma. Professionals were attempting to discuss with senior professionals the essential nature of social work education.

Some brief extracts highlight the quality of the interaction.

"The main discussion centred on the generic/specific debate - seen by the students as central and problematic to the Course's planning.

Supervisor: "Social work has developed on so many fronts it raises difficulty in identifying how to offer individually meaningful field experience"

Jean: "Because of this it's all the more necessary to isolate the central things".

Frances: "I have felt very much this year that we have got to know a bit about everything, and somehow been expected to come to all the lectures, and know a bit about everything, and I think it is just impossible to cover everything. I found it irritating that at the end things came which I found interesting, like community work, but somehow I'd run out of energy and steam".

Tess: "Trouble is there has to be something at the end. It's a real problem to know what, even if you have more options you have to start and end somewhere".

Frances/...

"Frances: "More options and more opportunity to choose would help. Then energy would not be at such a low ebb".

Tess: "To have options at the end you mean?"

Frances: "There might be other things which could be reduced, say psychiatry or Human Growth and Behaviour"?"

Apart from key issues about content, the organisation and framework of the Course came in for much discussion.

The absence of a shared frame, a curriculum jointly understood and available, made choice and holding of the whole in balance much more difficult. Inherent in this, and of prime interest, was the thorny subject of staff/student communications - felt to be inadequate. Ways and means were explored with enthusiasm; more informality, more getting to know people as people mattered; it was devaluing if this were not the case.

"John: "The problem is that there are fifty a year. I think that the staff found it difficult to come to terms with this; difficult to know that there are fifty, and the students have found it difficult to see themselves as a group - they don't see themselves as a group"

Joyce: "The difficulty is ending when people still don't know each other - that is not necessarily to do with size though"

Jean: "communication is a continuous effort. At this late stage we want to say something that is of value/...

"value for next year".

The pressure to shift into more personal and social relations with staff felt quite intense. It was countered by a staff member demonstrating his separate perspective, that of teacher engaged in an ongoing task.

"We are talking as if social communication would ease the learning process for students on the Course, I'm not sure that this is so. The kind of learning demanded is a different process It lies in the method of teaching, and lies in the way, the method in which one teaches what one teaches. A tremendous amount of the core lies in experiencing how staff tackle what they are trying to convey. I know how people talk about wanting a framework, that's difficult because I am not sure that's the most valuable way of learning. I have far greater difficulty in conveying my stance by talking than by demonstrating- social interaction does not do that. Is social interaction the same as good communication?"

Other staff pointed up the organisational and structural difficulties associated with more informal contact (in the shape of University Buildings, lack of space etc.) but the essential components of the preceding speech were not tackled. There seemed little recognition that communication might necessarily alter in the span of the year, nor was there real acceptance of the students' present/...

present need for confirmation though much of what they said was received without dispute or comment. The meeting ended when the time boundary was reached without any attempt at summary or formal ending.

To summarise briefly. The final phase had four main stages clearly demonstrated as the students sought to leave.

1. Personal more privately expressed fears of the OUTSIDE world.
2. General "tying up of ends" in which the outside gradually became more real, and success was legitimated.
3. Role shift in staff relations was attempted.
4. Reparative yet independently professional activity occurred.

The stage was characterised by a growth of personal independence, by group interdependence and by those feelings normally associated with separation. The tenor of exchange was generally positive, co-operative and hopeful.

In summarising this process I also want to draw attention to one atypical 'out of phase' event which is particularly interesting. Readers will remember the public energy and thought vested in the process described in the preceding chapter of settling "in and for" a placement. In this final phase, a supervisor having left, one student was faced with the job of changing supervisor. Not surprisingly this created anxiety and uncertainty/...

uncertainty for the student, tutor and supervisor. The student attempted to indulge in similar activity within the student group to that described earlier, but she was simply not heard. She was "out of phase" and the group's common support and interest was not available.

"Flo began to talk about how anxious she felt now that her supervisor had left. It was difficult to change, she is carrying a large caseload and her new supervisor does not understand. "I wonder how she'll do my report, we don't communicate yet I feel stressed and very cheated". The other students went on discussing their research task with energy. Flo was sitting at the far end of the table, the only person who seemed aware of her talking was me; gradually she leaned forward telling me, seeking support, an audience. The other students remained apparently oblivious".

(Student group in pub after seminar 25.7.73)

The brief point which I want to make is that dealing with change 'out of phase' with the tasks of the group deprives students of a significant amount of personal and emotional support which is normally available, and must therefore have implications for the management of the event by staff and the individual student.

The Supervisors' World

The work of ending the year for this group has different implications though a similar pattern of stages to that already/...

already described was evident. Supervisors for the most part go on; their relationship with the Course continues; it is their relationship with the student which ends.

Loss, therefore, is an important component but because it is not the end for ever, only of one cycle as it were, the feelings are tempered by this recognition. Nevertheless the work seemed as before curiously parallel to, and consonant with, the work and feelings of the student body. There were four similar stages:

1. Overview of the year as a prelude to ending.
2. Defining and agreeing standards essential to ending successfully.
3. Role shift in respect of relations with the Course and its staff. Clarification of dependency/independency issues.
4. Independent constructive attempts to improve the future, reparative activity.

They were dealt with at different levels in the Course, stages one and two being accomplished primarily in the regular fortnightly discussion groups, and three and four in the large supervisors' group vis a vis the Policy and Administration Committee.

Returning to stage 1. Although critical, the overview of the Course's functioning over the year was not accomplished angrily but reflectively, as something of which the supervisors had been part, and was reviewed as such. Paramount were feelings that the whole year was ending, what had been remarkable about it? Primarily the/...

the view of "faculty wallowing in a hole". By now familiar difficulties were enunciated; the organisational structure of the Course was not consonant with its increased size - there was a clear need for new structures and examination of old assumptions. There were limits imposed by size on the extent to which everyone could be involved in everything, and all could be individualised. A more careful examination of essential activities was necessary to planning. Finally, and crucially for this group, there was a lack of clearly expressed policy about fieldwork and some basic questions were posed. Who is in charge of the Course arrangements about fieldwork? What authority did they have? Why was there such a lack of co-ordination? Two kinds of group were defined as necessary in future:

1. A process orientated group which would deal with current Course teaching issues.
2. An administratively orientated group who would deal more clearly with issues of organisation, administration and Course/field links and planning.

Underlying this attempt were old questions about the relationship of the individual supervisor to the Course, the nature of the 'contract' and the requirements to be made of supervisors. How to reach decisions and communicate with them about such central issues was perplexing.

Stage two of this ending process was concerned with agreeing standards and deciding on essential elements therein./...

therein. Clearly there was anxiety about this for difficult questions had to be faced. As all the students bar one had passed the exam their ultimate success or failure now lay in the hands of the field - yet the fieldwork teachers constantly identified themselves as uncertain about the question of standard. Exam performances were examined where these were precarious, and hopes and fears for the final six weeks aired. As on other occasions the attempt was to find a standard by shared discussion, primarily of one student felt to be "at risk" on the one hand, and by generalised rather vaguely ideal notions on the other. Intense concentration, belying general concern, was invested in these discussions as ideas of pass/fail, pass/distinction were shared. The generality, or alternatively very specific nature of these discussions, must mean that in the end the decision rests with the fieldwork teacher assisted in some measure by the tutor - the responsibility seemed vested somehow in the Course, yet lay in a primary sense in the fieldwork evaluation. Ideas about 'fit' seemed to underlie ideas about standard:

"What ~~the~~ supervisor can offer and what the students needs, if these can be put together.

It depends on 'fit' - we don't know enough about it".

"It's the fit that make the standard and what each of the pair can do about it.

Something that grows out of integration and understanding/...

"understanding of each other's roles".

(Supervisors talking at meeting 18.7.73)

In essence, given the criteria for assessment contained in the appendix, ideas about standard were vague and couched in general terms. The difficulty was whether to evaluate progress or achievement, as the range within the class would alter the standard. Generally achievement was the goal, but decisions about level seemed to be reached by a process not unlike bartering.

"They must end ready to grow".

"the good enough social worker".

"the integration of the intellectual and feeling self".

"self aware".

"having a capacity to 'hold on' to what they know".

These were the phrases which recurred again and again, and within the values and frame inherent in these ideas the individual supervisor would reach some decision about the individual student, normally at this point in conjunction with the student. It would also be true to say that by this stage the investment was clearly in pass or distinction rather than pass or fail - somehow negotiations precluded failure for this group.

The third stage was concerned with role shift, or at least with an alteration in the power balance between Course and field. It was interesting in that the dependency/independency balance currently of primary importance/...

importance to the student body became a focal point here too. The aim was to establish a more equal 'partnership' one in which the field could make a more effective contribution to the whole. Some questioned the integrity of the partnership:

"Staff play games to make you feel part of the Course". (Supervisor at meeting 18.7.73)

Staff on the other hand experienced the period of relative calm and co-operation as enhancing of the 'partnership', felt now to be really growing.

"It's funny the way its grown. Supervisors wanted to be independent. They got fed up taking direction from the tutors, being told in childlike ways; its encouraging that they are saying we have ideas and want to further our thinking. This came from the supervisors not from the tutors now a fact that it feels more like a partnership before the tutors defined the policy, now the supervisors are sharing in it. I welcome that very much The question is what is the right involvement? What is needed and necessary for the educational process?" (Tutor explaining her view at meeting 18.7.73)

In fact there seemed little real evidence that the 'partnership' had materially altered in the year. The same communication problems, issues, and inter-group dynamics continued to dog the arena. What had altered was the perception of joint task in relation to student phase, /...

phase, together with the feeling implications of that stage. In an atmosphere of ending, of individual and independent contributions and a search for some consensus, some agreed basis for ending, there was little room for conflict - rather the task had become joint ending and legitimization of the enterprise.

The fourth stage, that of reparative activity, of the creation of a better future, took an optimistic note. Realistic appreciation and evaluation of Course/field difficulties was accompanied by a constructive attempt to be helpful, to diagnose so that all might in the future be well. Supervisors, whether in the joint review or in their own large meeting, contributed calmly and constructively in the attempt to rebuild the future.

And how might that future be improved? In their view by clarification of the following basic issues:

1. The role and function of the large supervisors' group in its attempt to link with the Policy and Administration Committee. Too much time was spent anguishing about this throughout the year. The group needed purpose and sanction from the University if it was to be useful.
2. The improvement of communication between the group, its representatives and the Policy and Administration Committee. Issues of feedback were central here. "I find a difficulty because in the Committee there are views expressed which are in conflict; the extent to which you are conveying the conflict, the/...

the extent to which this is helpful seems to be a total muddle. It's not helpful when things are in a total muddle. You need some discretion in the way you do it I wonder if a written statement would be helpful - all minutes suppress conflict, that's their function".

(Representatives at Supervisors' Meeting 11.7.73)

3. The extent to which this group represented supervisors' views in any case. Problems of attendance were the focus, only about twelve regulars attended from a possible membership of 35. Therefore with what authority did they and their representatives speak?

There was little consensus among supervisors about the validity of the exercise. Some held it was necessary to contribute at an administrative and planning level to the Course, others held the reverse view.

"It ~~has~~ no purpose, a total waste of time. I go because I am curious, not out of a sense of duty. It's a redundancy, might be better if there ~~was~~ some agreed purpose". (Supervisor talking at supervisors'/tutors' group 12.7.73)

Additionally supervisors had different time commitments to field teaching and to the Course. In the absence of any agreed contracts those fieldteachers who were available, interested and saw purpose came. Some though interested did not come/...

come because they could not afford the time commitment. Reasons for attendance or non-attendance were rarely made explicit so there was a good deal of uncertainty in the face of a range of different assumptions.

4. By sorting out some key issues already noted as needing joint attention. These included proper contracts with fieldteachers, policy about supervisors' reports, agreed minimum pass standards, the creation of a structure to meet supervisors' educational needs, shared thinking about the course content, course planning and timing issues in relation to the field component.

Upholders of the view that these policy issues were germane to the field and that it was proper to become involved in them sought to persuade the others plus the staff that a 'forum', a place outside the regular fortnightly groups, was a vital component of a developing situation.

In summary the activity of this group had constituent phases similar to those found among the student group, except that their relationship with the Course was ending a cycle, rather than ending permanently. General review of the year, standard setting and legitimation of the enterprise, role shift and reparative activity were the stages of the process. The feeling tone was reflective, independent, /...

independent, constructive, an agreed basis or consensus needed to be found upon which to end.

The Tutors' World

An increased sense of trespass occurred for me here. Staff were not regularly around at this time and it was hard to be sure of their concerns. Certainly there was sadness and perplexity about leadership change, a sense of wanting to perpetuate the present, of putting off this particular end. In a sense the business, where it was observable, mirrored that of the other groups. Staff too had to end this cycle of relationships, to 'tidy up' as it were, to agree standards and award prizes, and to plan and manage the future of the Course. This planning was much in evidence by the end, the next beginning seemed enshrined in it as it were. Prizes for this year, places for next, availability of fieldwork placements now and in October, plans for extension later. Energy already seemed vested in the year ahead, the end of one cycle heralds the beginning of the next.

To conclude then, the phases of ending for all three groups had four similar components. Recall and review of ~~past~~ experience, 'tidying up', ending and legitimating behaviour, role shift or its management, and reparation through investment in the future. A chart illumines briefly the main stages and tasks.

Final Six Week Block

<u>Student</u>	Integration of self and role
<u>Learning</u>	Increase in independent autonomous activity
<u>Phase</u>	Acceptance of interdependence Self evaluation

Course	MEDIUM/LOW CHANGE EXPECTATIONS FOR
Framework	ALL GROUPS

Tasks

Students	Ending - review and evaluation of Course experience 'Tidying up' - facing the reality of ending and of the outside by finishing assignments, achieving consensus about standards, legitimating pass and fail experiences Role shift - in relation to staff and self as worker Reparative activity - investment of self professionally in the future of the Course
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Fieldteachers	Overview - as a prelude to ending Definition of and agreement with staff about final standards Role shift vis a vis the Course, a sought change/...
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change in the power balance

Reparative activity - constructive
attempts to build the new future

Tutors

Overview and recall - 'tidying up'
activity

Standard setting - legitimating the
enterprise

Ambivalent role relations with field

Investment in new cycle

Communication

Mode

Reflective, jointly responsible. Increase
in open direct independently professional
communication in all groups.
